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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the remembrances or life stories of four young adult American Indians and their efforts to evolve an understanding of themselves as individuals and as culture bearers interacting in two different societies. The project objective was to investigate the correlation between American Indian people's ability to use their heritage languages and how they felt about their identities as culture bearers and as members of a cultural group. The relevant literature is reviewed concerning life stories, the development of social and cultural identity, and the centrality of language to self. The paper consists principally of selected transcripts of conversations with four consultants (O'odham, Hopi, and two Navajo) in which their descriptions of childhood, family, community, and culture are left intact. Discussion of the life stories focuses on the integral importance of the heritage language to the conveyance of culture, the close relationship between language and traditions, the necessity of the heritage language for both daily social interaction and for gaining an understanding of ceremonies and rituals, and its use as an indication of respect in communication with elders. Over the year-long course of interviews, the Indian consultants evolved the perception that to have a great sense of identity with their traditional cultures and to maintain and carry those cultures forward, they had to speak their heritage language. Contains over 70 references. (RAH)

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ETHNOHISTORIES: Learning Through the Stories of Life Experiences

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"Ethnohistories: Learning Through the Stories of Life Experiences"

INTRODUCTION

This paper presents four American Indian persons' remembrances of growing up in one particular culture juxtaposed with a dominant culture, and their efforts to come to know who they are as individuals and as culture bearers within the intersection of two different societies. The premise of the study was that a person's cultural identity and sense of belonging to a cultural group are interrelated aspects of her/his cultural, social, and linguistic experiences. The project utilized Life Stories as a tool to examine the relationship between their abilities to speak their Heritage Languages [Navajo, Innuit, Hopi, etc.] and their personal and cultural identities. Through the telling of their life experiences, the consultants were able to explore their identities and come to new understandings about the importance of their Heritage Languages as an integral part of who they are.

The discussions with the consultants focused on two areas: a) their language and socialization contexts and practices from early childhood to adulthood, and b) their notions concerning the importance of and the efficacy of Heritage Languages as central to identity and to the continuance of their cultures. Through the telling of life stories the underpinnings of culture, language and socialization processes were explicated as fundamental aspects which constituted holistic life experiences for them.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The construction of identities occurs not only in the social context of juxtaposed cultural groups, but also in the face to face interaction of everyday talk. Stories people tell about themselves, about others and about events or experiences seen or heard reveal to the listener those cultural, social and personal values and behaviors which are salient to the speaker's identification (Bauman, 1986). This is so because people make choices about what is reportable in accordance with their own views of the cultural models and values they hold to be inherent in their own psychological economies (Briggs, 1988).

Through storytelling and conversation, children make use of routinized speech to key particular social meanings (Schieffelin, 1990). This "is compatible with the Vygotskian view that sociocultural meanings are acquired by using language for particular purposes in socially defined activities" (Miller et al., 1990, p. 294). These functions of language in narrative stories and conversations perhaps are universal among all cultures wherein they "provide one [a] widely available means by which people create, interpret, and publicly project culturally constituted images of self in face to face interaction" (p. 292).

Life stories as primary data necessarily means that peoples' narratives about their life experiences are taken seriously rather than being regarded as support material of some particular central phenomenon. "By looking at ways people use the traditional dimension of culture as a resource to talk about the past, we may be able to see [life stories] as contributing to explanations of cultural processes rather then simply illustrating or supplementing ethnographic description" (Cruikshank, 1990, p. 2). The narratives may result in understandings about the dynamics of talk within a specific context as much as they may reflect the organization and the structure of the society. The implications for learning more about the relationship between cultural identity and Heritage Languages are linked to the discussions of life experiences. The narratives become informative for the consultants as well as the researcher in exploring the correlations between language loss and culture loss (Woodbury, 1993).

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project was to investigate the correlations between American Indian people's ability to use their Heritage Languages and how they felt about their identities as culture bearers and as members of a cultural group. The life stories and the resultant narratives were to facilitate the consultants' understandings of their lives growing up and having to deal with two diametrically opposed cultural world views.

The findings from the project were used to discuss these particular aspects of a rather complex phenomenon. When and to what extent an individual speaks a Heritage Language, engages in familial and social conversations, participates in traditional ceremonies and rituals with members of the sociocultural community are formative of the cultural identities of American Indian persons growing up on a Reservation. To a similar degree, the amount of traditional ways children acquire in the process of socialization is correlated with their sense of belonging to their heritage group.

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Life Stories

Life stories have recently been re-discovered as methodological instruments for depicting the emic perspective of a person's perceptions about their life experiences. As a counter to the emphasis on developmental models, experimentation and quantification so prevalent in the behavioral sciences, it is believed that personal narratives guided by open-ended questions are highly apropriate for gaining the insiders viewpoint (Cruikshank, 1990; Watson & Watson-Franke, 1985). The crux of the matter revolves around the question of how does one relate the experiences of one culture bearer to members of a different culture and do that with the least amount of distortion from subjectivity and sociocultural interference. Cruikshank (1990) reminds

us that only recently have narrative accounts been treated as more than a way to enliven ethnographies and add credence to anthropological inquiry. "The expectation seems less that such accounts will clarify social structure and more that they may show how individuals use what Sapir called the 'scaffolding of culture' to talk about their lives" (p. 1).

What life stories precisely do are provide a model of research that establishes a continued collaboration between the consultants and the researcher. Through dialogue, discussions and the interchanges of remembrances, the participants construct a frame for interpreting the experiences in the process of coming to know the cultures of each other. There is a reflexive responsibility for the participants to listen and truly hear what is being talked about, to place themselves into the center of the exchanges and to initiate repairs in the conversations when gaps occur in the understanding. The locus of control for the inquiry, then, is placed between the collaborating parties instead of with the outside investigator who enters the cultural community.

While life stories and life histories are related to each other, there is a fundamental difference between life histories and life stories. The disparity lies primarily in the function of the narratives. The intention of the life historian is to sift through the collected narratives to glean "facts" that will add support to existing documentation in order to make further sense of the "what" of history. Life histories are typically collected from a region or from a large number of people in an effort to gain that factual knowledge of places and events. The range of research is seemingly unlimited and includes such genres as case studies of boarding schools (Lomawaima, 1993; McBeth, 1983), historical perspectives of women's rights and sociopolitical processes (Gaitskill, 1988; Mackenzie, 1990; Mathes, 1990), family structure and land use (Aschenbrenner, 1988; Cool, 1988; Molloy, 1989), settlement patterns and human migration (Armitage, Banfield & Jacobus, 1977; Melnick, 1990), and studies designed to reconstruct the general social and historic context (Denzin, 1986; Kloskowska, 1990; Ochberg, 1988). These examples used recorded narratives from interviews in combination with National Archives, diaries, letters, court records, church and hospital documents, and literary works to re-examine and add depth to what was already known about a situation, was perceived but undocumented, or was gaining new interest and needed to be further illuminated. The underlying impetus for collecting life histories was for enrichment of factual knowledge and to add a more humanistic dimension to recorded history.

Life stories differ in that they function as a way to gain knowledge of how the events of time affected humans as thinking and feeling, subjective individuals who reflect on and evaluate their life experiences and occasionally change the directions of their lives. The stories function as windows into the effects on individuals and on a people living in particular situations (Linde, 1987). The daily give and take of life are revealed in the narratives and are a central feature of life stories. The stories provide an emic viewpoint to the themes of life (Butler & Bentley, 1989; Robinson, 1990), to understanding human actions and character (Andreas, 1992; Howard, 1991;

Rosenthal, 1991; Toynbee & Jamieson, 1989), to defining issues of gender and sexuality (Davis & Kennedy, 1989, 1986; Elsasser, 1980; Lykes, 1983), and to heal and soothe the psyche (Arminen, 1991; Becker, Blumenfeld & Gordon, 1984; Bertaux & Kohli, 1984; Burgos & Roos, 1989; Wrye & Churilla, 1977).

Each life story as a collection for study is powerful and provocative in and of itself. The directly spoken words carry the authority of the narrators as to the authenticity of how they acted as participants in the events and how the events impacted their lives physically and emotionally. Depending on the purpose of the collection, it may not be necessary to gather the remembrances from more than a few individuals. When the ethnographer's intent is to convey an image of life on an individual basis, the use of several life stories can give the reader a salient window to see how it was for that person. The life stories of just one individual can provide an understanding of what it was like to have lived through a situation or a particular phase of one's life (Dover, 1978; LaFlesche, 1978; Manitowabi, 1970). Extensive conversations with even a few consultants over a period of time can portray how rich life was and how cultural processes organized the experiences for individuals in the same community (Crow Dog, 1990; Cruikshank, 1990; Udall, 1989), or in adjacent communities (Heath, 1983; Jake, James & Bunte, 1983). What many of these monographs show is that a person's life story has the capacity to inform the reader of the daily events that occur in conjunction with the cultural processes, and how the socialization, Heritage Language and identity constructs correlate temporally with the social, political and cultural domains.

Life stories have the ability to delimit the readers' proximity to those experiences and provide another frame of reference to cultural processes. The narratives provide an emic perspective of cultural processes that ethnographers strive for and, depending on how the accounts are presented, allow the readers to situate themselves alongside the narrator. An emic frame of reference is the most salient when exploring a person's cultural identity as a fundamental part of cultural processes because identity is such a personal construct. Each one of us carries our own perception of who we are, how we want the world to see us and what behaviors we want to actualize to project our personal images to Others (Garfinkel, 1967; Goffman, 1963). Ethnographers may spend hours observing individual people, plotting where they go and with whom they associate, listening to their conversations and collecting artifacts that describe or represent their images. These methods situate their identities in the referential frames and within the cultural constructs of the observers. But in order to know who someone really is, we must listen to their stories. We must ask them to tell us all about their life experiences, about the remembrances of their interactions with other people, about how talk is used to negotiate their life paths, about who they believe themselves to be and about who and what influences their beliefs.

Life stories are more direct. The personal remembrances become the outsider's mind's eye for sensing how things were for the narrator. A more clear vision for the outsider is provided of the feelings, the attitudes, the beliefs and the interplay of words and behaviors of the narrator with her/his ecology as s/he experienced and interpreted the events and the other participants.

In sum, the value of the life story approach lies in its ability to mediate the subjectivity of the researcher by presenting the spoken stories of the consultants. All the problems of interpretation are not solved, however, because there remains an implicitness of cultural understanding that only the narrator can know. Even when the stories are told and the explanations to the questions are given, there necessarily remains that emic sense of knowing that only the narrator has. This is rightly so because the life experiences ultimately belong to only the one person.

Identity

On a macro level an individual's personal, social and cultural identity are aspects of the actualization of cultural processes. The formation of an identity, in the context of social interaction within cultural groups, can be described as a process whereby "one's developing sense of ethnic identity is influenced both by how others see one (ascribed criteria) and by the extent to which one feels and acts like a group member (performance criteria)" (Rotheram & Phinney, 1987a, p. 16).

We construct our personal and social identities through our encounters with other people in social contexts (Goffman, 1963). The particular contexts contribute to our expectations of how we should present ourselves and how others should present themselves. There is a mutual monitoring of selves and others in face to face interaction which facilitates understanding the situation and creates meaning.

There are in-groups and out-groups in society that make up the social structure. Members of in-groups have a conceptualization of their identities through shared understandings, routinized speech and activities, and common traits as they see themselves. Their differences from out-groups are seen as their norms of behavior juxtaposed against Others. Out-group members, the Others, behave differently. Those differences are part and parcel of the identity of in-group members. Out-group identities are also organized in similar fashion. The existence and identity of disparate in-groups and out-groups are contingent upon each other: they are perspectives of their own and Other's identities.

These groups have established norms or categories for group identification. The identity of the person is necessarily predicated on the roles s/he plays in society, regardless to which group one belongs. The psychological well being of the individual is contingent upon how well the roles are played and managed in order to stay within the norms of the groups. For a difference in the norms to be of significance, the difference must be viewed by society, that is, by Others, as being

a difference. The focus is on an "ordinary deviation from the common" (Goffman, 1963, p. 127). Conformity or deviation from the group norms are constitutive of the social Self. That is to say, the constitution of the social Self is derived from the face to face encounters with others in contexts of established expectations of attributes and behaviors. In Goffman's work, an individual identity is prescriptive, and society organizes the prescription.

Another way to view identity is that the conceptualization of the social Self is derived through the assumption of intersubjectivity wherein we jointly create meaning as a construct of our social identity (Garfinkel, 1967). That is, we understand things in our own unique ways which we derive from our biographically determined situations: our unique experiences built up over time. We talk with each other as though we share a common view, an intersubjectivity about our world. Inherent in this social interaction is the language of the group. For example, Basso's (1990) work, over the last quarter century with the Western Apaches and their language, is based on the idea that the Apache language and the geographical features were the very resources which transmitted the cultural models, maintained the social ties and networks and facilitated cognition through interpretive processes. Storytelling to the Apaches is their way of negotiating "images and understandings of the land which are accepted as credible accounts of what it actually is, why it is significant, and how it impinges on the daily lives of men and women" (p. 102). The language, because of certain linguistic features, is succinct and semantically loaded. In addition to place-names being purely descriptive accounts of what is actually there, place-names also reference activities which occurred within specific geographies, warn of dangers of the features and index the history of the region in an effort to teach the proper way to live life. Associated with many place-names is a moral story which is a directive about what is proper and what the consequences may be for someone who is acting improperly. Through shared interpretations, that is, the intersubjectivity of the people through language and shared life experiences, a storyteller may specifically direct a story to a particular individual to indirectly comment on their behavior and remind them that there are better ways to behave, and that if the person chooses to continue to act in such a manner, then the same or similar fate awaits them as happened to the person in the story (Basso, 1990).

On a macro level we are constantly constructing our social order in accordance with our perceptions of proper conduct and attitudes as prescribed by major institutions such as schools and governments. On a micro level social order is comprised of the ideas, bits and pieces of our everyday routinized actions which are embedded in background relevances which we know implicitly. 'Trouble' occurs because when in face to face interaction, we assume too much intersubjectivity of our different life world experiences (Garfinkel, 1967).

There appears to be some common ground in these two varying views of social interaction and the constitution of the social self. The most obvious is the focus on the individual in social

situations and in interactional situations. Goffman (1963) situates the individual in large groups and categories, and maintains the concept of the bounded interaction where people are mutually monitoring one another to check the fit of themselves and others into the prescribed categories of the social situations. He conceptualizes individuals as allowing the social environment and the interaction to inform themselves of who they are and how they are to behave. The social order shapes the personal identity, hence the impetus to portray a certain identity comes from the routines within the society. Garfinkel (1967) locates the individual in interactions with another individual and conceptualizes the individual as working to build a personal identity through ways of 'being' during the social interaction so as to appear to 'be' in a particular way. The personal identity aspires to a type of social identity. He views individuals as controlling or altering their routines to re-form their identities. The agency is with the individual to shape the social order.

Socializing agents such as parents, peers, relatives and teachers are important influences on identity formation, especially among adolescents (Eckert, 1988). As teenagers work to shape their own social order, they change their appearances, attitudes and language to construct an identity which will be a comfortable fit and orient with their peer groups; a group they chose to align with or to establish. Their newly re-formed identities and environments most generally are different than their old social orders and their identities which previously existed at home.

The formation of an identity is an interrelatedness of internal experiences and external experiences within the child's ecology. This process is continuing and is subjected to influences throughout a person's life span within the social environment (Sampson, 1985). Through the sharing of knowledge, language and experiences, children develop a sense of belonging. This sense of shared experiences is characteristic of ethnic identity, however, "differences in cultural backgrounds produce differences in both cognitive patterns and forms of social interaction. Moreover, these patterns have a different meaning in situations where cultures exist in isolation from others, in contrast with situations in which the individuals are being socialized in traditional cultural patterns as part of a minority group within a larger society" (De Vos, 1980, p. 112-113).

In the United States the situation is primarily of non-isolated cultural and ethnic groups however separated they may appear to be socially and geographically. In Alaska, for example, the various Native Alaskan peoples are unique and distinct, live in distinguishable geographic areas, but are necessarily a part of the larger dominant society both socially and politically. In other words, the features and processes of the formation of an ethnic identity are in the context of multiethnic ecologies. Further, the processes of ethnic socialization are socially bounded to specific situations and have referential contents which index specific ethnic and cultural world views (Heath, 1983; Mahmood & Armstrong, 1992).

In sum, the identity an individual constructs is derived from personal, social and cultural influences, and the relationships between the individual, the language and the society. Whether

viewed from the perspective of individual agency or as organized by society, the routinized, intersubjective and subrosa aspects of identity and role construction through the presentation of self in the face to face interactional process characterizes the processes people and societies employ in the formation of identities.

The Centrality of Language

In multiethnic situations, language becomes a marker of one's identity. "Nonstandard" dialects of English, such as American Indian English (Leap, 1988) and BEV (Wolfram, 1991) are stigmatized when encountered in social institutions, such as schools, where "standard" varieties are expected (Wolfram, 1990). Class, social status and identity have complex correlations with language variations. The "social values assigned to certain groups in society will be attached to the linguistic forms used by the members of these groups" (p. 96).

In diglossic situations there typically exists a high status language used for more formal activities such as religious ceremonies, personal letters, bureaucratic functions, education and media broadcasts. There also is low status language more appropriate for directives to lower functionaries, familial conversations, political cartoons and folk literature (Ferguson, 1983, p. 431). These genres are basic, fundamental parts of society in general, and to access the social networks constructed around these genres, one must necessarily have some facility with the high and the low status languages. Without such a faculty, individuals and groups are restricted from participation in certain activities (Hill & Hill, 1986). Aside from the rare isolated speech community, then, language tends to enmesh individuals in social networks by involving them in the social interactions. "Shared language is basic to shared identity, but more than that, identity rests on shared ways of using language that reflect common patterns of thinking and behaving, or shared culture" (Heller, 1987, p. 181). Language choice and language use play central roles in the formation of those social relationships.

Theories have been developed about the relationship of language to cognition, social processes, transmission of culture and the shaping of reality and behavior (Ochs, 1990; Schieffelin, 1990). Taking a social interactionist viewpoint in relation to the ways language is used in the socialization of children to an ethnic identity, sociolinguists contend that language is the medium through which ideas are exchanged and developed (Sotomayor, 1977). That is, talk conveys messages about identity by the way it is used, the things that get talked about, the organization of the talk, the experiences of and within the talk, the domains where particular types of talk are used and by whom. The interactive nature of language conveys and depicts a way of being which informs the child experientially about the expectations of her/his ecology (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986).

Experiences with language may include power relationships, status differentiation, institutionalization, coping strategies, imposition and discrimination, control, exclusion, solidarity, boundaries of in-groups and out-groups, a sense of belonging, familial organization, official designation, autonomy, and opportunities to participate in the affairs of the society (Schieffelin, 1987). In some geographic communities, small enclaves of ethnic groups can coexist and yet can enculturate and socialize their children to different ethnic identities by differential language use (Heath, 1983).

Heritage languages are one of the most obvious markers of one's cultural heritage and identification, more so than participation in traditional activities which can become fuzzy indicators. To the extent that traditions and the presence and use of heritage languages are evidenced, their significance as ethnic identity markers are directly correlated with the amount and the degree of intersection one culture group has with another culture group. For an attribute to be salient, it necessarily has to exist in the context of contrasting attributes in the juxtaposed culture or group (Wagner, 1981). While the linguistic situation in Canada, especially in Montreal, is most saliently composed of two equally large, equally dominant ethnic groups (Heller & Barker, 1988), in Alaska the disparity between language groups is prodigious. The situation of twenty-plus Heritage Languages scattered throughout the land under the canopy of English, makes the likelihood of miscommunication prevalent, especially in Heritage-English contexts. Problems can occur when two disparate cultural styles of communication interact in conversation (Scollon & Scollon, 1981). An Athabaskan speaker in her/his own speech community is quite able to actively participate and understand what is being said and will feel comfortable with the organization of the discourse. Likewise an English speaker is able to participate fully and comfortably in her/his own speech community. Whenever two distinct styles of communication come together, difficulties usually arise (Heath, 1983; Philips, 1983; Tannen, 1979; van Dijk, 1987).

With an increasingly multicultural society, the speech events within the public sector are quite often the scenes of encounters where "judgments of performance and of ability that on the whole are quite reliable when people share the same background may tend to breakdown" (Gumperz, 1982, p. 2). The unfortunate reality of these situations is that with more and prolonged instances of interethnic contact, the difficulties and misunderstandings do not abate. Over time these obstacles compile into characterizations of identities which in the end can lead to greater misunderstandings and reinforcement of stereotypes of the other person (John, 1972; McCarty et al., 1991; Philips, 1972, 1983).

Summation

As children grow and are socialized through language and talk, they form and re-form their identities as an integral aspect of their affective domains. They experience discontinuities and

resolve those discomfitures to achieve a fit with their notions of Self in their societies. For ethnographers to come to know the real feelings and experiences of another person it is necessary to listen to and participate with the stories s/he tells. Through the telling of life stories and through careful listening, we can situate ourselves alongside the narrators and come to know their real feelings and experiences. Life stories, then, are the most salient genre for accessing life experiences. Part and parcel of life stories are the emic perspectives of the give and take of daily life that necessarily constructs and reforms our identities. By and through the tellings we can better know the cultural processes, the belief systems and the influential factors within one's affective domain.

The concept of one's identity is subjective; that is, the agency is with the individual to determine and define her/his own identity. Identities are constructed from the individuals' perceptions of themselves, formed by experiences in their ecologies through sociolinguistic interactions with others and with elements within the affective domain. Ethnic identity cannot be assigned to a person based on their origins, to whom they were born, their status as immigrants or original peoples, etc. These are etic characteristics which are observed by Others, which are overt distinctions and which say nothing about how a person feels about her/himself. A person's identity is ultimately emically constructed through interactions within her/his affective domain.

Individuals not only construct their cultural identities according to how they feel about themselves, but how they want to be seen by Others and by the language communities with whom they align. The important point is that the volition and the agency are located within the individual: a person constructs and re-forms her/his identity interactively throughout life through changes in frames of reference caused by variations in experiences within one's ecology (Phinney & Rotheram, 1987b).

Children's identities are re-formed through the process of language socialization within sociocultural contexts. I do not mean to imply that their identities are radically changed. Rather, I am suggesting that through their experiences, children as individuals make shifts in their ways of 'being' brought about by changes in their referential frames through the process of sociolinguistic interaction and through reflection.

It is quite clear that the role of Heritage Languages is an important influence in the experiences of individuals and of the groups. Languages are embedded with cultural world views and convey to the speakers ways of behaving and a sense of belonging. How language is organized, valued and practiced is critical to the formation of attributes which characterize a people and organizes their world views (Ruiz, 1981; Spindler & Spindler, 1991).

METHODS

The Participants

The participants in the project were four young American Indian adults in their late twenties to early thirties who reside in a large metropolitan city in the Southwest. They are college graduates with three persuing advanced degrees in Medicine, Public Administration and American Indian Studies. They are from the Navajo, the O'odham and the Hopi Nations, and are linked through loosely associated social and personal networks. Each participant spent the majority of their elementary and secondary education years attending boarding and public schools on the Reservations. They grew up immersed in and surrounded with their Heritage Languages and continue to maintain close familial and cultural ties with their Heritage Groups.

Culture and Language Considerations

The choice of culture groups was not limited because the focus was on each participant as an individual with her/his own unique life experiences and belief system. The research question addresses the relationship of language, culture and identity and was not directed towards generalizations in the conception of the project, nor in the analysis. Each Heritage Group has their own distinct language, cultural constructs and social structure, and while some generalities can be made regarding customs, beliefs and ancestral ways that organize shared knowledge and understandings, the focus of the project was on the individual person and her/his own identity. That is, the attitudes about Heritage Languages, their feelings about their sense of belonging and the storytelling of their lives centered on the participants individually. By not limiting the diversity of the Heritage Groups, broader viewpoints, attitudes, beliefs and experiences from a variety of geographic locales can lend more insight into the relationship between Heritage Languages and cultural identity.

Our Discussions

The discussion sessions were conducted on an individual basis because they centered on what they could recall from their own personal experiences. Attitudes and beliefs are a central factor to the project and if the participants were able to talk amongst themselves, as in a group session, the stories they relate might orient to similar genres and omit other unique experiences (Brunn, 1988; Milroy, 1989; Spradley, 1980). Admittedly, that could also be beneficial. A discussion outline was used that the participants could review in advance to allow for time to remember some of the events in their lives.

Transcription

The audio taped sessions were transcribed following the ideas and suggestions in the excellent works of Bauman (1986), Bernard (1988) and Tedlock (1983). There are more than 60 hours of recorded conversation which constitute over 800 pages of typescript. For practical purposes those conversations were edited to include just the talk of the participants. The texts presented here are necessarily reduced and carefully selected from the more complete scripts, but are very representative of our extended conversations. Their words and the way things were said are still intact with all the pauses, repeated words and streams of conscious thought.

THE STORIES OF LIFE EXPERIENCES

Annelise's Story

O'odham are a paternal society with the father's line. You have an extended family system: brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and cousins. We used to call it a clan system which is really no longer. The extended family kind of replaced the clan system. Both sides are the extended family: my father's aunts and uncles and my mother's aunts and uncles. All those people would be just as equally important. The sons and daughters, too. The uncles and the aunts of my father and my mother would be our grandfathers and our grandmothers as well because they're the brother and sister to our grandmothers and grandfathers, so we call them grandmothers and grandfathers. In our culture it's just that when there's a sister or brother to one of our grandparents they are also our grandparents too, so we have not four sets of grandparents, we have the brothers and sisters of our grandparents and we call them grandparents, too. My nieces and nephews call my father's sisters and brothers grandpa and grandma.

When I was at my grandparent's home there would be people coming and visiting, coming to stay overnight or a weekend or whatever and I really didn't know who they were at first when I first started seeing them around. I can remember people's faces, but after awhile my grandparents would tell me that those were my grandparents. I would get a little confused because I thought, well you were my grandparents, but they'll say "Well that's your grandma or your grandpa, too," and then that's all that was said. I didn't really understand the blood relationships until later in junior high when I finally realized that all these people are related. They're brothers and sisters in some way. When my grandparents said that, I really didn't question it. This was something that was taught by our parents, too. When we would be in our grandparent's home whoever came into the home, and these were our grandparents as well, that we should listen to them as well, besides our own grandparents. I just learned that they were all my grandparents and that they were all the same people.

What it does is that when kids learn that the older people are also their grandparents they build a relationship up of respect for these people and they're not just some other person within

the families. They refer to them as that until it builds a relationship of respect. Because nieces and nephews would treat their own real grandparents with respect, so when they're being taught that those other brothers and sisters are also their grandparents they'll treat them the same as they would their real grandparents. So I think that helps build, keep the family cohesiveness together and that relationship among everybody keeps it together. Keeps it going.

I think the values and the kinship are important because that's what identifies that community or that society. The kinship system. To reintroduce that and hopefully it would help to reestablish that community. Because I think a lot of kids don't know. A lot of young kids don't know that kinship system. Hopefully it doesn't happen that it just becomes another community just like anywhere else. There are elements of that community that make it that. And a lot has to do with the people and that they're associated with one another or related to one another. The traditions and the values and the kinship. I think they're all, distinguish who you are, or that you're from another society. Another community. The cultural elements tell you who you are. The cultural values are important for kids to know. When kids are from intertribal marriages they need to know both sides of their histories.

What a family tree brings out is you're really tracing you, your bloodlines, but I think in the way you're taught culturally it's different from that because you learn who, what level of seniority people have in a culture. Grandparents, they have that level of seniority in a culture. So do all the brothers and sisters of the grandparents. They have that power to teach. That's something I observed, that since they all have that level of seniority that they have that power to teach. They have a lot of influence and you almost have to do what they say. It's really noticeable when you have children that have a real strong relationship with their grandparents, they go from their parents house to their grandparents house, and it's almost like something transforms when you're going from one house to the other because you do immediately have this real obedient attitude. You don't do certain things, you don't act in certain ways, but as soon as you go back to your own home, your own setting, it's kind of a release of tension because it's almost like being on guard. You get away with a lot at home.

In your grandparent's home it's something that's known that you don't behave this way, you don't do these things and you listen to what they say and what they tell you. Grandparents have a way of teaching non-verbally that, if you're not looking to see what's going on, you miss it. I think that's one thing that kids pick up really quickest because what we're learning is a big part of the cultural upbringing. If you're not aware of what's going on, you miss that. It's a learning process in the culture. You have to keep up with them, right behind them. You learn by following, you learn by doing. If you're not a learner, you're not aware and awake, you'll miss it, because rarely do they stop and say, "Oh, you should have been looking or you should have been listening. Now I have to go back and repeat it."

When I was growing up I was either at my grandparents or at our house. We visited my grandparents very often. My father's parents were just right there in the next house so we were always there with them. My mother's parents were at least fifty miles away so we would visit them on weekends and on long breaks and summers. We'd go stay with them for the whole summer. Good teaching environment I guess. They wouldn't send all of us at once. They would send us, one or two of us, down there, so they always had the other three that they'd have to take care of. There were five of us kids. It's good because they taught us, depending on who we were as a child, they taught us differently because we came at different times, throughout our visit. We basically learned the same things, but I think how they handled it was a little different with each one of us. We came up with the same education with our grandparents in the end. Every time my grandparents would talk to me they would say, "you should know this" or " you have to know this."

My grandparents took us and taught us about different things, simple things like picking, harvesting the saguaro fruit. We would go with my grandmother and she would tell us why she was picking it and what it was going to be used for. Not explain as we were doing it, but her teaching us about its uses. When we would get back home after a pick she would start to process it for different uses and we would watch. We'd just follow her and when she would ask us to do something we would just do it without asking why we had to. Basically we would just ask questions about what she was doing. Why do you do this, why do you do that. It was kind of like shadowing because we would watch and the next time we did it she would expect us to know how to do it. With our parents it was just learning by doing the same thing. Anytime we were learning something new they would take us and not really explain to us why they were doing it. Just take us and we would be involved in what ever the activity was. Basically part of daily functions, daily activities. That's how we would learn. That's how we would learn something new.

They taught us about being independent, but also treating everybody equal and treating everybody fairly. Seeing yourself as somebody, as a kid and not be too isolated either within yourself. They did teach us, they did a good job teaching us that you can be independent. But when people talk to you, you should talk to them. You should be able to communicate with other people around you. On the other hand if you were real independent and didn't say anything that would be sort of stereotyped as being passive and real humble, not to interact with people.

With my grandparents if we had a question we would ask it in O'odham or we could ask it in English. My grandmother on my mother's side, she knew English. She was bilingual so she understood and we were able to talk with her like bilingual as well. But my grandmother on my father's side didn't understand and she didn't speak English so when we were with her we had to ask the questions in O'odham so that she would understand. The same thing with both

grandfathers. They didn't really understand English that well so when we talked to them we should talk in O'odham. Or if we asked them something it should be in O'odham. It was what was expected of you.

We spoke O'odham almost all of the time at home, say like 98% of the time. My parents were English speaking as well. My mother was a little more skilled in the English language, but my father really didn't speak a lot of English. His main language was O'odham and his parents didn't speak English. They were fluent in O'odham so that's what he spoke all the time. But my mother spoke a little more English and her parents spoke mostly O'odham, but they understood English. My father's parents didn't really understand English so it would be hard to try to communicate with them in English.

At home my brother and sisters were bilingual. We spoke both O'odham and English and I think that mostly came from school. The English part. We went in the schools already understanding and speaking English and we just expanded that. When we were speaking English was mainly when we had to do work from school because you couldn't really translate that. It was just mainly with school that we would speak English, when we worked together and do homework together. If we used O'odham it would be mainly just at home when we were playing because we didn't have too much to play with at the time so we sort of just, we played outside a lot and so when we were just playing we'd talk O'odham.

There's a lot of openness, but there's certain things that are more closed. Your family unit is. There may be certain things that you do as a family. The other thing would be ceremonies. Those are real restricted. Open things would be like every day, daily activities, going to school, going to work.

They had social activities in the community that we would go to. I remember going to ceremonies as a kid doing nothing more that just listening to what's going on there and maybe even participating in whatever. If it was social then you had to, like a social dance, you participated in the dancing just like everyone else. We would just go and listen and watch. Six years old. That's the earliest I can remember going to anything and observing what's going on. By now they thought I was going and be able to understand, just to be there and not make such a commotion, being a kid and being restless. We were taught or just more or less expected that when you go to things like that you have certain behavior and that behavior is just to listen and to not be disruptive. Whatever process is going on, part of the ceremony or activity, they felt that I was ready to do that by then. We would go and be there with the rest of the community members. Sometimes they would have an opening statement, why they were having the activity, what it was for and just explaining why everyone was asked to be there or invited. These were mainly dinners or feasts that we would go to not much. A lot of ceremonials.

People were pretty stable where they lived. From what I saw in my grandmother's village, people that lived there pretty much stayed there. On my father's side, the villages that we went to visit or people, our relatives on his side pretty much stayed where they're at, and today they're still there. The only reason that they moved was when, would be because of marriage. It would always be the female to move to wherever village you were marrying into. But people moved temporarily like to go stay a month, a week, maybe a couple of weeks to go help out or whatever need that they were needed for. So when they were moving around it wasn't because of stability or that they were moving around because they were trying to find the right place to live, it was mainly because of help needed somewhere else so they would move according to that. Or maybe different celebrations, maybe different social activities or functions that were coming up so they would go in there to help out for that particular activity or function. And then once it was over with they would go back to their permanent home.

Some of the native ceremonies are more restricted to men. Just be with the men to be involved with that, as part of the committee or part of the people that would go to, my place would be just to go to listen and to observe. If it's a social dance then I would dance if I wanted to. But the preparation of something like that and carrying it out is basically up to the men to do all that. So I don't think women have a big role in doing that. The preparation and carrying out the actual activity, it wasn't something that women got involved with.

Other than my parents, my brother and my sisters, the only other people that came to stay was my mother's parents which would be occasionally, like overnight or over a weekend. They didn't have transportation so she would have to go get them on a Friday night and then they would stay until Sunday. They would occasionally do that. We wouldn't do anything special. It was time for them to come for another visit, mainly just come to stay. For holidays it would just be our family there for Christmas or Thanksgiving. I don't remember having anybody else come because of transportation. If we really celebrated with anybody it would probably be with my father's parents. They lived right there. My other grandparents lived farther away. My mother's parents who were the least, like twenty miles. The rest of them lived in other places because they had married in other places, so that's where they lived. Mainly in certain villages.

A real important thing, I can recall one of my grandparents telling me that when you go to visit other people or your relatives then you, when they ask you something you have to know who you are as an O'odham and always address them in O'odham. And talk to them when they talk to you in O'odham. I felt a little bit of pressure there that I would have to know O'odham in order to communicate with the other relatives. That was always stressed, even if it wasn't your relatives, no matter who the person was, if it was another O'odham then you should speak to them in O'odham. That we shouldn't be mistaken for somebody else. And sometimes not mistaken to be somebody else, but maybe looked down at as that we weren't taught those things. That we

missed something somewhere, that my parents being my teachers that somewhere that connection was not made. And that they must have not valued a gift, or maybe didn't think it was important to know that.

My dad did a lot of work with the land, so he would always go out to see. He was kind of like a ranger. He would go out and look at different places in our area and the people knew him real well so we would always come in contact with the people where he traveled. My father checks on the water holes and then he checks fences to see if all the fences were OK, wherever they're located. Especially during the summers when it's really dry. He just does that regular, and then he also used to haul water to the people that lived out there because they didn't have running water. If they did have running water they had to have drinking water, too. There was a well that was kind of close to our home, about three miles from where we lived and he would get water there to get to the people in that area. One visit would be just to find out if they were needing water and the next time he would take water for them. I always remember hauling water and traveling around with him to the people who's home we went to haul. It would take him a while to have to get water out of the tanks and put it in whatever they needed, whatever they were storing their water in. Always the woman would try to make me feel comfortable and at ease while he was out there working. Sometimes she would like, we would go into their house and he would start talking to them and the conversation would be all in O'odham. I would just sit there and listen and then I would hear him say he was going to go out there and start putting the water into whatever their storage tanks were. I thought "Oh, I'm going to be here. s I guess I'm going to stay here." I would think that in my mind. I couldn't see out the door. I'd just sit there and sort of fidget like any other kid. Fidget and wondering what I should do next. The lady would always seem to be fixing something, something for me like tea, hot tea. And I would notice her putting something on a little plate, something she made. Home made baked cake or something from scratch and she would be cutting off a little piece and putting it on a plate. I knew that was going to be for me. She would try to make me feel like I was there, start asking me how my mother was, how my other grandma was, little thing like that she would ask me. I would talk to them. That's what my grandmother and my grandparents would say. When you go out, when people talk to you, you have to talk to them. Most of the conversation the people would talk in O'odham. They would say like, "When you go to their house and you're in their house and they talk to you in O'odham, then you should be able to talk to them in O'odham." I was five when I was doing this. During that time I was still at home with my mom. When my father went out to do these things she would always send me with him. I thought that was a good thing to have happen.

The culture and the language, it's like that's who you are and that distinguishes you from other people who are on the outside. If we came to [the city] and then went back we knew that

was different because when you're somewhere else other people don't understand what you're saying or the language that's being spoken and when you go back or when you're speaking the language whether you're home or on the outside, that's your language and it identifies you as somebody different. You're from some place other than anywhere else in America. To me it's like your language is your culture and both of them together make up who you are as a person and that you are from somewhere different, somewhere that no one else is from. So that both of them together puts you sort of like in the center of that culture or that community, that social organization. You're part of that whole society. When I spoke English I wasn't suddenly somebody different. It was just being able to go back and forth using both languages whenever the need came or whenever it happened.

When you leave your home or your Reservation you know that you're different from out there. I think as a child that that's like a concept or something that you have because you're only used to your environment. When you go somewhere else you do feel like you're different or you're only there temporarily and that you're going to go back to your own place. Any time we heard we were going to town, then we're going to go to town and were going to see all these people that are different from us, or we're different from them. Coming out of that environment, you see yourself among other people and you know that you are different. Because you have nothing to look at when you're there. When you're in your own environment, that's your environment.

Language is one of the important elements. Knowing where you're from. You may not know, you may not speak the language, but just knowing your culture and something about the language is just as important. Rather than not knowing anything at all. Maybe even just a few words. I think that's all you need, just a few words like, especially when you refer, like say those kids refer to their grandparents. Grandpa and grandma. They just need those two words in O'odham. That would mean so much to them, to my grandparents, to my folks, for them just to have learned the words in O'odham. You passed. You passed and it's an honour. It's something that I'm sure they would enjoy being called by a kid.

When I am speaking O'odham you have a sense of belonging, a feeling of being a part of a group, a society. And that I have something in common with the rest of the people that speak O'odham. That you're being understood and that there's some kind of relationship taking place. I think that's just a belonging, being part of that kinship. Something that's real important. That's what it brings out. I'm always reminded that I'm O'odham and that I understand and that I know that I have the ability to speak O'odham. Maybe I don't use it too often, but when I'm put in a situation where I have to, I'm surprised that I still have retained or maintained my language. Our parents have reinforced all the time, that if we don't use the language, we're reminded to. That we are O'odham. They just want us to have something, at least in their lifetime, while they're still

around. And I think that's good they're continuing to reinforce that all the time. But now in thinking how we used it quite a bit when our grandparents were still living and it was the way that they communicated. That's the way that they communicated. But now since they're all deceased, my father is pretty fluent and he chooses to speak and communicate in O'odham. If you get to the stage where you're questioning or wondering what he's trying to say when it's clear to him and it's not clear to us, then we know we're losing it somewhere so we have to go back and get familiar with it again. It's not too difficult to do. It does happen, but when you get right back into that environment and are immersed into it right away then you just pick it up right from where you left off.

I'm real sensitive to what should be written and what shouldn't because of my own experience with some of those things and having people around me that have been a part of those things. On the other hand, on the end of conducting or carrying out those things, I would be real sensitive to saying that "Yes, you can go in and start recording or documenting all these things." One side of it that's against that when those people who know those traditions, or know that knowledge leave they carry that with them. And to have it written is maybe an easier way to learn it, but to actually learn it from the people that know it and speak it and can transmit that knowledge requires a greater commitment. And a greater degree of discipline to do that. Something that's been learned over one hundred years is suddenly available in paperback form. So against that I would be real sensitive to that. Maybe in another twenty years and I saw a lot of things falling by the side, the wayside, I would have a different viewpoint. Depending on whether there was some, if the language is still being pretty rich or if it's not. It's evident that it's not, that something is slowly eroding.

The language would help them see who they are and that it would help them or hopefully make them feel that they are a part of this society. They are the community and they have something to, that they are a valued individual. That's the bottom line. That's the only way I can put it, that they're a valued individual within that community with all those things. All those elements that make up a person. So if they didn't speak the language, but at least they understood, but they knew all these other elements, that they would be a valued individual.

I think what [this project] did is it's probably gotten me to think, I guess, about the language and probably retention of it and how to keep the language, how to keep myself involved in the language and it's something not very easy to do especially like when most of the language is somewhere else. And for me, I guess, it's a real personal experience because I understand the language and I'm a speaker of the language and my family are all speakers and I feel like maybe it's a part of it that's missing and so the way I look at it is very personal, yet I think about how I can be part of a, I guess, a language that's being used every day back home and that given the circumstances of my situation it probably would be impossible to do that. So when I have, when

the opportunity's there to be involved, I guess, with just little small things where I can hear the language, you know, it gives me a lot of, I guess, a lot of, I guess, personal strength to be part of where the language is happening. Like at home, for example, being at home, you know going from [here] where you don't hear O'odham at all and especially this place where I'm at right now, my work place, it's nothing but English spoken here all the time. So when I go back home it's nothing but O'odham spoken in the home. It just feels, there's a different feeling that I get when I go from one place to another, because I know that I understand it and I know that when I go back every time I go back I still, it's like, when I understand every word that's being said I know that I haven't lost my ear for the language. But speaking it is a different thing because you don't have anyone to speak it to except maybe when I telephone home or run into people, O'odham people that are here in the community or they are here by chance, like on a Saturday, I might run into somebody like at K-Mart, somewhere they might talk to me in O'odham. I think in that way it's gotten me to think about how I can be an active part of what the language is, just it's daily news, but right now I don't see that's possible.

I've been thinking about how, that the language is something that's really unique about a person. If you look at like people anywhere in the country, that if I went to somewhere in the East and people kinda looked at me and kinda wondered or asked what my ethnic background was and I identified myself as an O'odham person and, that's what makes me, I guess, different from other people and that I am O'odham and that there is a language and that the language is pretty strong and that's what makes me, I guess, unique, from a person in the predominant society 'cause there is a language that no one else can speak or understand and that's something that happens where a whole group of people in a certain place, in a certain geography of the country. Just like when we go to like another Reservation, I guess, for example, going to the Apache reservation or the Navajo reservation or to the Pueblos. Their perception is already they know that you're from somewhere else and if you know your language and you do speak your language and if you're travelling with family or friends or whomever that speak the language and you're speaking the language, that identifies you with,like another tribe because of the language. There's two distinct languages that are spoken, one is Navajo and O'odham, or either Apache and O'odham. It kinda identifies who you are in whatever place you are if you're a speaker of the language.

It got me to think about my role as a person as a language keeper, keeper of the language and trying to maintain it with what I'm currently doing, you know, and knowing that I'm not really a part of where it happens the most, which is like at home, where it takes place. So I think if it brought anything forward, I think that's what it did, is got me to think about that and maybe work at trying to maintain what I already know. But also to improve maybe and communicate more with my own people in the language. I feel like I'm a real, even though I've been away from, even though I've been away from home for quite some time I still feel a very, very much a part of my, I

guess, where I was brought up in the community where both my parents are from. You know, I still, when I go back there I feel like that I never really left, you know, and that's because I'm able to understand what what's going on there with the people, but also just to understand what's said in O'odham and to be able to communicate with them.

Charlie's Story

I'm basically 100%, 4/4, Navajo. I'd say Reservation raised. I'd spent, born in [a small Reservation town]. Spent elementary school, junior high, high school in various parts of the Reservation, mainly in the central portion. And after my senior year in high school I came down here to [this city] back in '79, in the fall of 1979. Spent four years down here, graduated in 1983, with aspirations of becoming a veterinarian. I turned in a real half-hearted application to a couple of veterinary schools and I didn't get accepted to any of the schools. And so, I returned to the reservation in 1986 to work at various jobs. At the time I came down here from, from the Reservation I was, you know, I hadn't, a lot of things you don't know about until you're knee deep and you're trudging through. I started, I rodeoed a lot in high school so, um, actually two years in a row. I did get straight A's my senior year in high school, [a Reservation] High School, and I thought I was going to come down here and take these folks by storm. I was breathing fire. And I thought, "Yeah! I'm going to leave home and, to leave home and I don't want to live, ever live the way my father had lived. The way my family had lived." But I was basically ready to go home after my second, second week of classes. It was a whole foreign environment. It was 104 degrees. I had been wearing, summer had just ended, I had my best rodeo season up to that point. I was used to wearing Wrangler jeans, boots, and T-shirt. Now, I, I spent maybe the first three days dressed like that and I soon had to invest in a pair of sandals and some shorts and a T-shirt. I had the hardest time getting to sleep at nights. The cars that went by. The noise outside. I had a hard time adjusting. The heat. I had to go through "walk-through" and that was a traumatic experience, um, walk-through registration. But, um, I got through. I attended the first two weeks of school. I was just totally amazed at the, at the people. At the number, the class sizes, the rate that things were moving, you know. I had a full course load and, um, the second or third week I thought, "I can't deal with this. I can't handle this."

My father, my family that I grew up with, that was the only model I had. I have found out that was not the way to achieve what I wanted to achieve and to be happy. Um, I was six years old, my father, when I broke my own horse. My first horse. A big stallion. And my father just kept throwing me on that horse until it was rideable. So, I'd end up in the dirt. I'd end up in the barbed wire. I'd end up on the ground and he would just keep putting me on that horse until I could ride him. That was his, his concept. That was his idea of the male, the maleness. And it is a Western influence. A big macho guy. "Well, if I make my kid tough now, imagine what he's

going to be when he's a, when he's a grown man." It doesn't turn out that way. It doesn't work that way.

I was really fortunate, though, growing up. My great-grandmother was really spiritually connected with Native philosophy. That's where I picked up a lot of my, what I know of Navajo religion, Navajo philosophy. And she was a herbologist. People from [a town], clear across the Reservation would come and see her and get herbs from her. So, she knew. She was my first exposure. Right after [a bad] accident I had a, a Warrior way ceremony, as part of the Blessing, in fact it can counter as a Blessing. A Blessing way is basically, you know, there's, there's, they're ceremonies that make you more aggressive. Highly aggressive, like after the war, after the battle. It helps you put away the fears, the pain, take care of business. But it counteracts the Blessing, the two work together, that's how the Blessing way works. There is one part of the ceremony that prepares you to deal with the hardship, to deal with adversity. So, anyway, I had a Blessing, a Warrior way rite, was being, and very aggressive. And in the morning, the medicine man said, "Hey," you know, "You need to have this, this, it is mandatory that you have the Blessing way done about every six months." I just had my last Blessing way done six months ago, four or five, actually, and I notice a tremendous change in how I feel, in how, what happens to me and how I relate with children, how I relate with animals, with this universal harmony when I get, and it's beautiful. It's gorgeous. I'm centered. Well, how I feel now is that I have made connection, universal connection. I am part of what I call, this is my own phrase because I feel this way, part of "the greatest force in the universe." So, spiritually has been the source for me. I see why the things in my life have happened and it makes meaning and is also give me, a relaxation.

My parents really tried like crazy not to maintain this, the traditional way of life. And I think a lot of it has to do with this Western influence. This Western way is THE way, and the only way. That's the way of the future. There's no need to talk about it. There's no need to learn the religion, to learn the culture, to learn the [old ways]. At the top you've got parents or Navajos that have, have had a college education, a college degree. And that was basically the criteria for a lot of management positions with the Navajo Nation. With the [Association]. At least, that got flushed down the toilet when the Western, Western movement, the Western, there isn't, and that's a problem now that I see. Nursing homes are becoming a real big fad on the Reservation these days. Off, you know, the border towns. Now why is that? Well, there's the, a long time ago people had, everybody had a certain role, had a certain place. There was this meaning to all people, to all parts, to all parts of the family. And so there was really, you know, grandma and grandpa had a role. They had the wisdom. They had stories to tell and you learned by the stories. There was the language. There was a lot of tradition that was passed down this way. I mean, it's just like raising sheep. I mean, there's no reason to raise sheep any more. You've got a lot of these "7-11" stores, convenience stores. Go down and buy meat. Buy a lot of things. The

trading post concept is also losing, it's gradually pulling away from the trading post. Trading rugs. Trading jewelry for goods. And language. I mean, bottom line is language and culture is going down. And there's no reason to pass on a language. There's no reason to pass on, I mean, no obvious reason that, you know, I just think, you know, my, this is just my, my opinion, my interpretation of what's going on. Western influence is coming in too fast. A lot of people are not understanding. They're not getting the full picture. They're not taking time to really look at what's going on. There used to be this harmony concept, that everything lives together. There's a purpose for all things in life. And that, you know, the Navajo philosophy is based on this harmony concept, a balance, universal harmony. Everything fits together the way it should. Along comes competition and it's this Western concept of we shall conquer. We shall be the best. We shall run over other people without seeing the other side of that. Along the lines of doing that we also destroy a lot of things inside. We've destroyed the relationship, the respect you have for other people. The respect we have for the earth. The respect we have for the constituents of the earth and the spirituality gets lost and crumpled up and spit out along the way. You're no longer living in harmony. You're living for yourself. You're living for the self-assured way. That's Western conflict. That's Western process.

There's a lot to be learned from the coyote stories, when grandma and grandpa tell about, of coyote getting himself, getting himself into trouble. And so the child, the children, the kids, can relate to coyote and they know that, you know, that, "I should, should have more respect for other people, for other things. I shouldn't be like coyote, trying to only look out for myself and only trying to get what is mine because when I start doing that, I don't see a lot of the hazards in life." I mean, now, in looking back at it. It was, it was, I guess, one of the better parts of the experience, to hear the stories, you know. There's a lesson to be learned in the coyote stories. You know, there's the poor coyote that keeps doing to himself, but there's, there's something to gain, something to get out of that, as he's sliding down the, pushing everybody out of the way so he could be the first one to slide on a rock down the hill. And he ends up with the rock on top of him because he hastily, you know, there's, there's a moral to the story in other words. There's a little bit of coyote in all of us. We get ourselves in really bad situations. I think that's, that's part of the value of, of the language, or of being acquainted with the Navajo history, the Navajo religion, the Navajo philosophy. I mean, the way of life. There's a way of living, there's a philosophy that has gotten diluted, or gotten lost totally. You know, I, I think that, that there's some stories that could, that could be told by, anytime, or, it really depends on the story. I mean, it really depends on the purpose of the story, you know. You know what I'm saying? It's kind of like the dances. I mean, there's, there's some ceremonies or dances, um, in these ceremonies, that can only be done with the ceremony or done, you know, at certain times of the year. And there's some dances that are social. There's no repercussions. No purpose other than to be social.

Social kinds of, enjoy the dance, enjoy, to enjoy the, the movement. Social songs you can sing and dance to any time you want, you know, to feel good. So, I mean, there's some stories that can be. On the other hand let's say that the finger painting, you know, the strings represents the spider, and there's that part of the, you know what I mean? I don't know what the hell the proper name for that is, but you can only do that in the winter time for obvious reasons because the spider is hibernating then. The players or the characters involved are around at certain times. You don't want to interfere, or you don't want to [irritate] these other characters, these other real, um, the snake, the spider are very, very sacred. But you don't mess with those things. You don't, so, I don't know, like, again specifically what kind of stories, or whether they have to be tied into Navajo religion, Navajo philosophy. I don't see any, there's a lot of stories, personal experiences that have connotations to or have a relation to some of the Navajo beliefs. My beliefs. And they're not necessarily stories. They're a, a telling of an experience that has a, that has a tie with the beliefs.

The language is part of the deal. You have to, it's part of the, the Navajo prayers. The prayers serve, some ceremonies require you to recite with a, the medicine man will give you a prayer and you have to recite that. This, this, especially the Blessing way. "I want to see the beauty. I want to be a part of beauty. I want to feel it, where beauty comes from." Um, first man, first woman, as they encountered certain conditions coming through the four, the four worlds. So, yeah, you need to, you can't say that unless it's, unless it's part of the, the ritual, you know. It has to be done. Somebody else could recite that for you. They could say that for you. They could be your connection. In other words, I've seen ceremonies done for whatever reason. The biggest reason being that the patient didn't speak the language well, so, there would be somebody there, an older person, who would recite the prayer for the, for the patient. And that gets, you know, the thought is, well, that kind of dilutes the whole ceremony. It's not as powerful as it could be.

It would be a tremendous loss to lose any culture. To lose any language. There are some concepts in Navajo, in the language like *hozhooji*. Just the concept, comes, *hozhooji* is, I guess, translated as beauty. But beauty can mean a lot of things. But *hozhooji*, this image comes to mind of this beautiful, of, it's like sometimes I'm going up to [the mountains] on a summer, on a July day and coming into this meadow and just lying down and seeing the grass, seeing the sky, seeing the Ponderosa pine trees. There's a feeling, a smell, like a, you know, the evergreen trees, the sun, you know. And so *hozhooji*, that's what the word comes to mean. So there is, and the philosophy, the religion is passed down in the language. It's, a lot of times will get misinterpretation, missed concepts, and a lot of history, and religion, is told, history is told, in the eyes of the people, or in this case, countered, translated. And so it is a big part. You can't have a Blessing way in English. In other words, it's gotta be done in sequence. It's a ritual where every

sequence has a purpose, has a, you know, everything serves its purpose. Even the Navajo language, the Holy People, they have their parts in this ritual. So, without the language you don't have a ceremony as it's supposed to be.

I think the biggest thing that really concerns me is the language. We don't speak enough Navajo for [my kids] to really, when you're living here in [the city], they don't speak enough Navajo to really be able, in order to be effective in, with any language. I would guess, is you've got to use it. You've got to, if you don't use it, well, it's.. so, that's been a, a concern. So we, we'll have periods of time when I will just speak Navajo to them and they'll respond the best they can. Bit I don't, the schools, um, learn English, or the way our situations, or the way the situation is set up with being down here for one thing. For another thing my time. I've, I'm lucky just to spend half a day with the, to do things with them, let alone try to, like on a little more formal scale, try to teach them Navajo. Teach them what I think is the, and to try to go beyond that or to try to do more is a little frustrating for me. I know it would be frustrating for them because it's just, "Why are we doing this, dad?" I mean, you know. "My friends here in [the city] are not having to," you know. It's, they wouldn't know. It's hard for them to understand. It's again, this living in two pools. I know the need arises. There are ways, there are ways of acquiring the language, acquiring the, um, there are a lot of new, because of technology, there are a lot of ways of receiving this information. The Navajo Community College Press asked me to do stuff, some books and audio cassettes of the language that you, you know, listen to. And the stories are also on tape. There are books, history books that you could read on Navajo history so you don't have, it's not passed on verbally. And I realize that there's a lot of things that are lost in the process, but seeing as how this is a dynamic, you know, it's always going to be changing. And I guess, part of the biology, just, the Darwinism, you know, this mutation, this change, being ready to change, being adaptable, you know, using the tools that you have today to stay in the flow of what's going on at home as well as what's going on here. Things are not the same. They're not the way they used to be, nor will they be in the future. So you've got to mold and bend and do what you can do with what you have. So I don't, as a result of that, I don't do, I don't sit at home with Navajo, or cram Navajo, the Navajo language down the throats of my kids. I will use it with the, and will, will encourage them to use it. But we don't really have the time to sit down and teach, you know, the Navajo philosophy, the history of, but we, we'll talk about it. But like I said, there are remedial ways of, of acquiring the teachings, like through tapes or books. They produce a lot of good stuff, useful stuff. Tapes, like I said, you know, Navajo language tapes. Navajo stories. Coyote stories. And there are also a lot of, you know, ceremonies, a lot of songs and chants on audio cassette. Social stuff, of course. There are some Blessing way songs that are considered social. They're sung in Navajo. They don't do it for the religious, the philosophy, or philosophical stuff. That's done for a purpose. That's done for a reason. That's part of the sacredness, that's

part of the ceremony. But that sacredness is the means, the, the energy. A part of that energy is, is used to heal, so you don't want to abuse that energy by, by reproducing it. It's kind of like the sand paintings, you know. There's some beautiful sand paintings done on ceremonies, but they're destroyed after the ceremony. They're not produced. There's no picture to take and they don't glue, you know, they, you couldn't hang it on your wall or anything. It's strictly for the, for the ritual. And the ritual is, you know, a method or technique or process and each step of that process has meaning and that meaning lends towards the power of the ceremony, power in the human, um, mode. If an individual feels strongly enough about learning something they ought to learn to do that for themselves and not to, not for profit, or not, you know, that's just not the way it was intended. That's not the way this, this information is. This spirit of the purpose, again, is kind of distorted. You, you tamper or you dilute the power of that, whatever the ceremony is, by doing this stuff. Exploiting this stuff. I mean, I can sure respect the feelings of these, the elders and the grass roots people.

There's a strong, very strong encouragement of language and culture. And to retain these things within the Tribal government, or a tribal decision in general. And that one came all the way down from the chairman, all the way to the chapter houses. A lot of the young people get chastised at the Chapter house. The chapter will have money, you know, to run various programs for high school students as well as college students. And I've, you know, I've seen and witnessed and been a part of attacks made on, on, verbal attacks on high school kids or college kids because they couldn't communicate in Navajo, or they really didn't understand the history. The position of Navajos.

Communication, I think, it has to do with perspective, with, perspectives is based upon experience or culture, you know. Experience eventually leads to culture or tradition as we know it. But there is this feeling a lot of times of trying so hard to learn somebody else's language. So after while you've gotta think, especially as a child, or you even, you know, adults, we must be less than, we must be sub, I guess less than. And, why, or why don't we do things our way and why are we trying so hard to do things this other way. And I see that a lot with students. However, you need to communicate in you code at these, at this particular area within the Navajo Nation. And it's fine, it's good, it's OK. Look at it as acquiring. It's going to be a struggle. It's going to be tough. But, I mean, the more you use this, the more you'll feel comfortable. I didn't feel that growing up. I'm sure my parents didn't feel that growing up for maybe, or whatever reason. But I think the biggest reason was this Western concept of education was new and maybe it still is new on the Reservation for a lot of people. The teachers included as well as the students, as well as the families that send their kids to, to school. So there's that, just that rough edge. There's the loss of why we're, why they're doing what they're doing. But I guess the point I'm trying to make is this concept should have been introduced earlier to children that, you know, this

is a new way, a new code that you're going to be learning. And here is your code. And your code's important. It's very important just as this code is important. And it's a way of dealing, communicating in, in this fish bowl, just as you communicate in your own little fish bowl within this bigger fish bowl. And it's, it's a way of getting, getting, expressing yourself and for you to receive information. Again, back to listening to your environment, or being a part of your environment. The birds and the feeling connected to that.

I can, I can relate to kids coming off the Reservation, going through this. I tried to play somebody else's game, using the sports analogy. I tried to be the Anglo guy. I tried to be the white guy. I forgot and I left everything that made me, me. That got me here. I left everything back home. And it was just difference in traditional, in the environments. Socially. there's certain things I would do back home. Just really odd, weird here in [the city]. I had a lot of near death experiences as a child, as an adult. And for some reason, um, I was kept, kept alive. I was kept moving through this thing and I'm finally starting to figure this out now, today. This has, I guess, increased my belief, my faith in myself. And everything's going to turn out OK. Which in turn gives me, allows me the opportunity, the power to relax and enjoy things. Enjoy my children. Enjoy the experiences I have now, and not take this stuff so darned seriously, but to give it my best. To give it everything I have which I know it's going to be important. I know it's important now, being here in medical school, but at the same time this other stuff's important to me and that's what holds me. That's what makes me who I am now.

I personally feel being Navajo, it's the philosophy, it's the, it's your attitudes. A lot of my prayers are done in English, but they're based on Navajo philosophy, Navajo religion, Navajo ceremonies, but it's just easier for me to think in terms of English, but to feel the, you know, the spirit of the Holy People. The strength of the Holy People. It's the energy that's generated through this, through the prayer, through the, so, with that I think that's kind of my, my definition, or my description of feeling Navajo. Feeling a part of Navajo is the people that you interact, for one thing your environment. I mean, if I was maybe in Los Angeles, downtown Los Angeles or in Oakland, you know, I would feel a little less Navajo only because I don't have the support. I don't have the, the, support, the, of course I would still carry the philosophy. That has gotten me through a lot of things in life whether it's here in [the city] or whether it's back home on the Reservation. I was exposed to a certain way of living and I found that that really didn't, doesn't work for me. So I've had to come back to the Navajo philosophy, to Navajo religion. And I see a lot of similarities, a lot of other spiritual elements, the, how the Oglala Sioux or other Native American tribes view universal harmony. And also the relationship with the people. I have a strong relationship with my people. The people on the Reservation. But also there's my people at [a] Health Center. Or the Yaquis for that matter, you know. I have, there's a Yaqui family that treats me like a, a part of the family. So there's something there. There's something similar that I

feel or that they feel with me here in [the city] or on the Yaqui Reservation that I feel and people, my family back home feel with me there. So I think language is part of it, but I don't think it's the, the tell tale, or the, the decisive factor with feeling Navajo. And feeling Navajo is an experience or it's based upon the experiences you've had. I know some Navajos who don't want any part of the tradition. Who don't want any part of the culture. But never, they're Navajos, you know. They'll always be Navajos. And I think they choose to, to live and do what they want to do wherever they want to do it.

But there's something to be gained from this philosophy, this way of looking at life and it's something that has kept Native American people alive. Enduring what they have endured. And so that's the benefit. That's the, that's what you keep, that's what you want to always have and be proud of and utilize the spiritual components and, like the O'odham people, this happiness. Once you see it as a positive attribute, "I have this. It's mine. It's always going to be mine." I can add on, I can add, you know, I don't have to just see my own culture, my own religion, my own spiritual, you know, components myself, but I can look at other things. And the things I can use I will keep, take with me and then we will not live as the pre-traditional. I mean, let's face it. Change is happening. Change is going to happen. And it will never be the same. And so that's another problem, big problem I see, is both sides of the fence, on the Reservation, are trying to continue their own way of living. Their own way of doing things. And so, you have a lot of, um, things don't happen as fast as they should, or need to. In other words because of these two, this movement, this parallel movement. And instead of this convergence and the understanding, I mean, everything has its place. This is a sacred circle, and everything has, has a reason. Everything, you know, will eventually fit together in the end. And at this point in time, you know, both sides are unwilling to see that. And I think over, over time, in the future, you will get more and more Navajos, more and more Native Americans for that matter, who will begin to feel that this is a very valuable part what they bring off the Reservation to learn. And they add on other things and when they go back they still have, you know, it's not going to be this, it's not going to be that. It's going to be their own. It's going to be a way of dealing with life. The external, this, this system, you know. It'll be a way of dealing with the system, but yet retaining, keeping the good things that we've got, we've got going. And passing those things on, you know, so we don't lose the language and we don't lose the culture, the traditions and the spirituality and rituals.

The spiritual, the religion, it's a big component of all of that. And you need to keep, it needs to keep, it needs to remain. It needs to keep in existence in order for everything else to make, to make sense. I'm not saying that if it's lost or it's gone or if it's not used, everything else does not make sense. I mean every individual has their, you know, their own interpretation of what we get out of a certain sequence of events, or a certain ritual. It doesn't have to be a spiritual ritual, any ritual that you do. The bottom line is peace and taking care of each other and taking care of this

burden and taking care of the universe in general. So it's borrowing concepts, what I can use or what, what I feel, you know, from the Christian, from, as well as using *hozhooji*, you know, the Navajo philosophy and even sweat lodge. I go to a Lakota Sioux Sun Dance sweat lodge on a regular basis. That's an intertribal thing, but the concept is there. The purification, the purpose is there. The ritual is there and most of it is, you know, there're the Lakota songs. I sing the Lakota songs, but I feel, you know, it does something for me just as *hozhooji*, just as church, just as prayer does. So for me it all has its place. It all has its values and it makes me who I am. The personality. The person to do whatever I choose to do.

I think you have basically no choice, you have no choice but to accept being Navajo. Accept or try to be as Navajo as you possible can because obviously there's differences. There's skin differences. There's, now it, just owning the language. You've still got what's back home on the Reservation. You've still got a way of life. You've still go what, your experiences or your culture. I kind of equate, I, maybe there is a difference between the two, but as far as I'm concerned experiences, you know, equate to a, a culture. That's what your culture is based upon. You know, the history, the experiences of your and your family and your ancestors. But I would have no choice but to accept the fact that I'm Navajo. And I see life because the way I do, because of my experiences. The Navajo. The Navajo myths. So I would think you would have to, there would be, there might be some problems with that, you know. There might be some internal, internal struggles. There is definitely something to hang onto, to use, to keep tapping into. I do think that you would have no choice but to try to figure, figure out a way of becoming as Navajo as you possibly can. Or, you know, try like crazy to run away from it. But you'll never get very far.

[The project has] helped me to realize just what or how big a role communication plays, and it's the communication skill, it kinda relates to the self esteem and self confidence and my experience having come from a reservation school where the goal was just to obtain the basics, communicating in English being able to read, being able to speak or talk, speak English, that was basically the goal of the school and having had that, being able to read books in high school, being able to kinda get an idea of what life was like outside the immediate environment of the Reservation and having to come here and find out that a lot of my classmates were very, could utilize this skill very well, communicating verbally as well as written form and it wasn't just a matter of throwing words together. It was a way of putting the words together in a correct, proper way. To self esteem, if you're not communicating fluently, if you struggle for not necessarily concepts or ideas but struggle with a way of communicating those ideas it's a tremendous effort and if you can easily let that inability dictate how you feel about yourself to the point where you're afraid to do it, you're afraid to write, to speak, to talk and so this can have this downward spiral which again is related to academic progress, or academic ability. So that this

whole process has given me an opportunity to look at, to look at what my education was like at [where I was born], at [a Reservation] High School, what my experience was when I first got to the city, what I experienced my undergraduate years, and yet after that going back to the Reservation and working in an office and producing, you know.

So that's kind of what I got out of this. And it's also, for the rest of my life, I think I'm going to be an advocate of education or an advocate for education and the power of education, um, on both sides of the different culture, Western society as well as traditional philosophy, traditional education and again, back to justice or as a link to justice, an advocate of justice, what is right and where, what is culture, what is culture defined as and how does that definition stand in the way of the individual acquiring goals, acquiring the end product. So I think, you know, it's allowed me, it's made a link between lifestyles, cultures and acquiring individual goals or defining those goals and then picking up the path or process to get to those goals.

Peter's Story

For me Hopi language has always been part of growing up, especially when I was a kid. We lived with our grandparents and our parents in one house and a couple of uncles in the group. It was a really good model of what Hopi life actually is and how it is actually supposed to work. It makes my idea of Hopi what it is now.

When I was younger our house, there's one large room and a back room to it. We lived in that house where everybody, the living part was all just very small. It was one room. I had two uncles that lived there with us at the time. Both on my mother's side. My grandparents, my grandmother and my grandfather on my mother's side and my parents and us three kids. All my uncles, my grandparents they all spoke Hopi and they were always talking Hopi. Everybody spoke Hopi except all of us kids who were just learning. Just being exposed to it all the time. I wasn't actually taught Hopi. It just kind of seemed like it was, I absorbed it.

Back home in the summer time we all pretty much got up early. Everybody was encouraged to get up early. My grandmother would get us up early or my uncle would get us up early. After a while they were the slave drivers. There were so many of us. We would all go down to the fields, pull weeds and whatever until about noon when it started getting real warm. Then we would all come back up. In the beginning there used to be somebody there that would cook for us. Like my grandmother or an aunt would be there doing some cooking. Then the afternoon would be all free time, pretty much.

When we used to live there with my father, in the earlier period, it would be us that would work in the fields. Me and my father and my two brothers. I was about five. We would be the ones that would go down and take care of that. We'd go down and work hard. We used to be the ones that would kind of follow up after everybody was gone in the summer to go back to

school. It's not all quite done by the time that comes around. Because some of the corn will have dried and it's ready. You have to wait until it dries on the stalk and then you go down there and then you take it out. That's the corn for storage. That's probably most of what's down there. You have to pick it off and throw it into a pile. Break the stalks down and then go back to the corn and then you load that up and bring it back up. And then they would take the husk off and put the corn away. Sometimes when like say they were getting the corn ready for storage, off the cob, sometimes some ladies would come by to help my grandmother or my mother. They would be there knocking the corn off the cob. The dried corn. They'd be there for a while. Hopi is matrilineal, but the women don't really have the ability to look like the leader unless she's wearing some kind of clothes that denote her, or she doesn't really look like a woman, just by nature. There's a lot of thing, ceremonies that the women have to get stuff ready before everything can take off. Just for the Tequila ceremonies a lot of the women have to get everything ready. All the food preparation. They have to be able to feed the kachinas food before the kachinas will come. For them to be able to feed the men that are going to pray for the kachinas to come before the kachinas can come.

When you go to school there's a lot of time off except when it's the summer time. The planting season. After May we have to take care of all the field work. That's the first duty and then you go play. So usually it has to do with the heat of the day because usually you go down there early in the morning. You work until about twelve when it starts getting hot and then you quit. Then you can do whatever you want. And then usually that's it or unless something really needs to be done and then you go back down in the afternoon.

We were taught things like planting. How to plant corn. Pulling weeds, hoeing weeds. How you take care of corn. My dad's fields, making the fields right. How to be good people. How to treat people. A lot of behavior is like that now. Just the way we act so we expect you to act the same. Like for example just with eating. The way you present yourself, a lot of Hopis would see that as being particular. Especially with behaviors. You're not supposed to be too loud in your dress, for example. It seems to me when you look at it the other way it seems like an envy thing, too. They don't want you to envy. I've seen and I've heard people talk about it in that way. That happens a lot, too. Not wanting someone else to be better than them.

Early on it was my father and my uncles who taught me. Grandparents. My mother was always working in the home, but I don't really have a whole lot of memories of her when I was a kid, teaching me how to do something. It's mostly the men that do the teaching. Your uncles are the people that have the responsibility of teaching you what to do. Besides your father, your uncles are the ones who have authority over you. So they're the ones that manage you when you're a kid and start to grow up. When you're able to go to the fields, then they're the ones that manage you. Take you out to the fields. Like four years old. I've seen people they take their

kids down there and they get the feeling early on of what goes on in the fields. The kids they all carry things, even the little kids. You can see them get a sense of responsibility and they want to carry stuff so they carry a couple of ears of corn. Help you put it into the sacks. In the fields that only thing that's really going on is the corn. The activities. I don't remember a whole lot when I was a kid being like that, except when I started getting older. You remember going down to the fields. And when you're working real hard is one of the biggest things that you pick up. You really honor yourself by working hard in the field. That's what your uncles teach you all the time. They speak to you when you're doing that, what do you call it, like in the third person when they say, "Well, it looks like Peter was working real hard," like that. That's the kind of reinforcement you get when you know you're doing it right. That's how reward is given for teaching you to do something. The big thing when you're a kid, you're taught not to be lazy. That's one of the primary things of Hopi is not to be lazy and that's probably one of the biggest things that maintains the culture. The culture takes a lot of work to uphold. For the younger people now, I guess that that might be something that's not too easy to do when there's a really easy and quick society outside. One that is so much easier to follow.

Anytime anything was taught to you about the culture, about the way things work, it was always in Hopi. It's always said kind of like as an absolute. "This is the way it is." You accept it as a given. But when you're a kid you'd ask why and then they'd tell you something about why it's done. Sometimes it was just one of those things where they expect you to get it. Sometimes it just wasn't told to you. I don't think I ever really questioned. I noticed my younger brother did that a lot. That's when he was young and he was finding out everything, so it is all right to do it. I think because I didn't speak a whole lot of Hopi when I was a kid that I didn't do that. For some reason I didn't speak a whole lot of Hopi when I was a kid. I understood everything. But I think it had a lot to do with how I soaked it up, too. Because not speaking Hopi people thought that I didn't understand it. So a lot of what I learned was by watching, less by being taught. With my younger brother it would be that the learning experience was more like a friendship. With me I think it would be more like a school thing, "That's the way it is." Because when somebody has to speak in English, or when somebody thinks they have to speak in English they do it, but they don't like to speak in English, teaching Hopi things. With that same kiva thing. Everything anybody says in the kiva is always Hopi.

Our village, upper [Village] is seen as progressive and lower [Village] seems conservative. Lower [Village] people are a group and upper [Village] are a separate group. Upper [Village] versus lower [Village]. That right there is to a lot of people bad because the upper [Village] people have said yes to electricity and plumbing, things like that. Modern architecture. Whereas down below the people don't want that stuff. They don't want roads built and paved. They don't want electricity brought in, no running water. They are in a separate sub-culture. I'll give you a

really strong example. In lower [Village] all their ceremonies for kachinas are held in the kiva. The night dances. And in upper [Village] they have a community center and they let their kachinas dance in the community center. It's really pretty shocking. Even the way they talk about the kachina spirits being portrayed by Hopis wearing the mask, and in lower [Village] that's something that's not said. It's really traditional and you're not supposed to say that. It took me a long time to believe and I still feel kind of uncomfortable saying that to you because you're not initiated into the kachina society and right now you're not qualified to hear it in that way. That's strictly adhered to when you're in lower [Village]. The kids won't hear of it being talked in that way. In upper [Village] it's really different. I was just there earlier this year watching the ceremonies in lower [Village]. I was walking back along the rims and I decided to stop at the kivas along the way, and their kiva has electric lighting inside of it. It's really new. Modern kiva. It's kind of like one that a museum would build. It's really different from a traditional kiva. And then along the way I passed by the culture center and it was really strange to see the kachinas dancing in there on tiled floor beneath neon lights. And once they were done they walked right out on the steps. In full light and underneath, there's street lights up there, too. And that just upset me. That is not supposed to happen. That's what the attitude is up there. It's really without regard for a lot of the things that make Hopi ceremonialism sacred. That make it something that is special. Like a mystical thing. There's one of the old prophecies that says that the world will come to an end when a kachina in the plaza takes off his mask. That's just an example of where a feeling might be on that. Really disrespectful the way they do it up there. You always hear talk about how people in upper [Village] would talk English in the kivas pretty much all the time. It's disagreement between upper and lower [Village]. I think there's another part to understanding Hopi is that a lot of things aren't told. When you get told the rules it's told to you that "This is the way that it's always been," or "This is the way you do it." And if you don't do it the right way you're not always directly admonished for that itself, not like in a formal setting. People hadn't told each other that they were starting to do things the wrong way, but eventually this is a preview to how it is now. Transformed into what it's like now.

Hopi culture is pretty diverse in it came from a lot of different places. The Hopi religion, it would be pretty hard to imagine them doing those things in English. Living-wise, without the language, just on a day to day basis I don't know if any of the meaning of the way people live would be changed. The way they mean things more, when they're talking about them. Because families now can live speaking English, but a lot of their mannerisms are Hopi. It's more like the way of life. For example, when you take to your mother. Imagine yourself taking like a gallon of milk, like a loaf of bread and a package or meat to your mother. That's one thing, that's probably one of the biggest things that Hopis do. That's one of the main things is when they go to visit their relatives they would take something like that to them. Because they're obliged to support all

the mothers. That's kind of what I'm talking about. That's a behavior that isn't included in language, but it's something that is spoken. So I think there's enough people there that still know a lot of those things that that part of it probably would go right away as they get into big screen TVs. Life size people. TV does have a big effect. The culture without the language would probably be injured by it. It would be like removing one of your legs. It wouldn't be as easy to walk. As easy to do things.

Without the language I think the ceremonies would be affected. Ceremony-wise, it's probably one of the biggest things and probably would be a main concern that would be lost. The language would be lost. The meaning of words would be lost. A real loss. A lot of the ceremonial words that are used, like the different types of corn. A lot of those, I didn't know a lot of them. I wasn't really clear what they were. The different ways of those prayer words, those long words, I didn't know the meanings of those and a lot of those are very important for the ceremony because a lot of those are pretty much the basis on which they're built. Probably from the time they're born it would be a whole lot easier to have them grow up in it and get the meanings and the feeling of the language and how it would be said. That would be good for learning the language and the culture. Having the two go together. If you want someone to just learn the language, then it could be taught later on. Wanting a person to learn the language I think that would be mostly to help preserve the culture. To help preserve the old parts of the culture. There's a lot of culture that happens with Hopi that the language would be necessary. I didn't know a lot of the ceremonial words and who knows, if I had known about them before they might have influenced the way I am now. It might have influenced the way I chose to go some place. Maybe I would have stayed back there. Knowing more of the language would have more of an effect on what I would do and how, my attitude towards the kiva ceremonies. Or the kiva itself, or being an active part of it.

I think the way I was taught was pretty good as a whole. How it affected my life after that, I guess, was real good. My uncles all and my father were all alcoholics. Even that helped me as a learning experience. It's taught me that, many ways you can accept a person. Just because he's an alcoholic doesn't mean he's a totally bad person. It's just something that afflicts someone. Because normally my uncles are your ordinary kind of people. So it really taught me that sometimes it's your duty to learn things. It's your duty not to fall on the wayside in terms of learning things. All that reinforcement about knowing a lot was I think a really big part of my growing up. I paid attention to that. I just always wanted to learn something new.

When I was having a difficult time in dealing with being Hopi, my Hopi past and English speaking society, that I was trying to get into, it seemed like at that time when I was thinking about my childhood, it seemed like there wasn't a lot of support for me to grow up as a Hopi. I guess there's a difficult side to it and there's the benefit side to it once I came through it all. I

figured out for myself that I can be whatever I want mostly because I wasn't held to be only Hopi by my father or by my mother. Even though I have a free choice, I also had less ability in the Hopi culture and so there's a trade-off. There's no way I could be the best I could be as Hopi and still be truly accepted, truly acceptable person of the Anglo culture. To give you examples of this, I would have to be taking care of the fields right now and getting things ready for that. I would be involved in the kachina ceremonies back home. Different duties. Taking care of my younger relatives. There's a number of things in my life now that, I probably couldn't live comfortably like this at home. So that language or the teaching of a kid would involve a lot. It would involve the culture into it. It would be insisted on, teaching Hopi so you can talk with Hopi relatives in Hopi. It would be hard not to involve him in the Hopi language, though. It would be better to teach them that because it would be Hopi and they would be entitled to a language that would benefit the kid. It would open other avenues for him that may open up ways that aren't harmful. Other possibilities that evolve within the culture. I think I would consider myself able to show him both cultures and maybe even be able to mix them. That would be a good goal. It would mean controlling every minute of his life. I've never raised a kid so I can't really truly conceptualize what it would be like.

I guess when you first become aware of living in two different cultures it does seem like an either/ or thing. The more you're with it, the more it seems like it's a trade-off of different things. Not everything has to be either/ or. Looking at where you want to be you can trade some of the things or maybe just improve on the ideas. When you're exposed to both of them and you hear dogma from both sides, that's when you realize that both cultures aren't totally right. And so you begin to pick the truth out of the whole thing. That's probably what I got. Sometimes like with the ceremonialism of Hopi. Sometimes you begin to think of that. I did that for a while and I decided it's not worth it because when you do that you're messing with emotional ideas and those are like idealistic ideas and religious ideas, and really don't have any place for anyone really to pick apart because they're in that realm. It's not like changing your shoes, or it's not like taking your shoes off if they feel uncomfortable. Or cutting your hair because it will be easier for people to not be scared of you. In terms of daily living, I started to pick things I could be comfortable with. Any thing I thought I could live with that weren't bad things to do. That weren't Hopi. Like learning how to be polite to people the Anglo way. Not a lot of Hopis do that. Or like for example, table manners. A lot of Hopis they don't learn table manners. You're being too particular when you do something like that. Wanting finely cooked food is not something a Hopi would want. Sometimes you find a balance, like I want great cooked food now and then. It's mostly because things like that are easily obtainable here. It's hard to be humble when you're not in a society that practices it all the time. You've got to separate the cultures if you're going to do all of both. You'd have to be one person one time, another the next. It's not really possible to do

both. Even now my listening to the different words or my expression of ideas is not the same thing as the way the Hopi would say. I don't think he would speak in the same way that I am. The voice inflection not being as great. The amount of words and the attempt at being precise with me saying something wouldn't be exactly the same. Hopis don't try to really pinpoint things. They usually generalize. In Hopi culture there's no real need for precision. Tradition in the Hopi life, it's not made for explaining theories of relativity.

Feeling Hopi and speaking the language has to do with belonging. I don't speak very good. I don't speak my language really, really fluently, but I think sometimes I speak it very well, yet there are others that don't speak it at all that are more, sometimes I would consider them more Hopi than I am. Language may be part of belonging, but it's not everything. You can communicate with the people that are truly traditional and you can get something out of it. You're not less than those who speak the language really well.

So in terms of being exposed, my exposure has been different and that whole idea of being exposed to a lot of different ideas is really, it's created that sense that I don't know if I've really become who I'm supposed to be. And so at certain times I've tried to tie myself to Hopi and then I've tried to exert myself as a person who is able to know a lot. And I've gone down both those paths. I've gone down the absolute roads of being just strictly Hopi or just being a strictly logical person. And I found out that you can't use any of that in an absolute way. There's no way you can actually live and be that way, and be human while adhering to those things that sharply. So I've had to mix both of these things. The culture and the logical sense of life. You can sometimes separate them, but most of the time it works best if you, when you use your facts with your culture.

In terms of criticizing my own culture, I went to the point where I couldn't accept the kiva ceremonies in my mind. That was a big conflict. At that time I had an Anglo girlfriend and at that time I was really picking up a lot on how Anglos really were. Reservation people, a lot of them have really naive views of how Anglos are. A lot of them, because of the people they see on TV, they believe them to be really good in their morals and things like that. What really upsets them is when they actually meet these white people. A lot of them don't really adhere to that. They don't really have very good morals. A lot of them judge prematurely how you are just on how you look. And that's really an upsetting thing because you expect, you come from a place where everybody treats each other as human beings and then you go to another place where you're judged on how you look.

I've gone from that extreme of not being able to accept those things and then from, at that time I was trying to find an absolute. I was about twenty one and I tried to find an absolute of which culture, because at this point I was thinking about this girl seriously in terms of marriage. She didn't know anything about the Hopi culture. I was thinking I would have to take a turn this

way or a turn this way, because at that time I didn't know how to integrate both. There was just so many flaws in both societies that it caused a large amount of anxiety to me. And a large amount of hatred towards both in general. A large hatred of societies as a whole and of groups of people and of group processes. I think that's why I decided to start treating people as individuals. Largely because a lot of what group behavior is isn't oriented to the individuals but towards satisfying a self image of where you fit in that society. That was probably one of the major conflicts in my life. I still have a lot of that group orientation.

I didn't really hone my ideas about accepting every culture and being able to adapt your culture to fit what your surroundings are. Especially adapt Hopi to my surrounding cultures until the last couple of years. I don't think I has settled all of that stuff until I actually got a job and I actually begun to relax my ideas and just started living. Now that I've come to terms with both societies, I think that Hopi is more focused on the well being of man and I think Anglo culture is really focused on improving your knowledge. That's what I think are the good points of each one. My motives, the majority of them come from Hopi and the means by which I'm going to get them come through Anglo society.

I guess the project kinda reaffirmed that I'm a pretty unique person rather than I'm more a Native American person. Even though there's a Native Amreican culture that I grew up in, I don't feel that it's, I think I pay attention more to what I am and I think only at certain times, I think my personal thinking on something or feeling on something tells me what I'm going to do more than what the culture tells me I'm going to do. I think sometimes I still do it in the name of Hopi. In other words, there still is that wide acceptance of different people, in Hopi, even though at times it looks like the people aren't going to be accepted. I think it's helped me to focus on using my ideas a lot of times when I know they're right, rather than using the cultural things that says you're right just because it's Hopi. I think it's important to keep that changing, for me I think that's my opinion. Even though at the same time, I think the language should still be used. I think that the language should be brought up to speed with the changes.

For me, being Hopi is not trying so hard to be Hopi. I think when you do that you take away the human part of it. You take away the human aspect that makes you Hopi. You can't act like a Hopi, you have to be a Hopi. I think that's the major thing that I look at. It's not about looking like a Hopi, it's about actually being a Hopi.

Julie's Story

I'm Navajo. I'm a contemporary traditionalist. When I think of ethnic, I'm thinking of, you know, a classification. Is she Native American or what. I guess it's more of a category than a classification. Where culturally it's a little bit more sensitive, I mean, you're getting more down into what you're, I guess would be the contemporary traditionalist. Ethnic orientation, I guess

generally would be Native American. And then I would follow that with, more specifically I would tell you my clan system.

When I talk to people who have no understanding of the clan system, I will sometimes take the time to explain that and really, like go really further into describing who I am. But with that you bring also, describing how the clan system developed, and why we value that so much. So it's a lengthy introduction if you go about it that way, whereas if I'm speaking to an audience of other Native Americans, I can mention that briefly and they'd understand it and there's no real explanation involved. So it really depends on who I'm talking to. My mother's clan which is my primary clan, the clan I go by, is Edge of the Water People. You know you tell another Navajo that, and they're going, "Hey, my sister," or you know, there's a relationship already formed right at that introduction. It's kind of an identity feel-, relationship. And it's funny, but that's just how we identify with one another. You know immediately, and you just feel like, a kind of connection with them from that point. My father's clan is Towering House People. You know, you have the five major lines and then from there you kind of have the subclans. If a woman is Navajo the major clan has to be the mother's clan, the minor clan would be, her subclan would be her father's. My mom always tells my kids, you know, this is your clan. And she tells them one clan only which is my clan, which is her clan, too. So the father's clan just kind of gets mentioned once in a while. It's part of the maternal thing, in the culture. My grandmother took great pride in being one of the major clans and long, long ago. And it's still being carried on today.

When I was little we lived with my grandmother. My father and my mother, they married quite young, well, eighteen, and I came along when my mother was nineteen. So they were just getting started. My dad had a very good education. He went to school at a boarding school. I think he was valedictorian of his graduating class. He met my Mom while she was in [an Arizona town] going to school. I still haven't put it all together. They always tease each other about the railroad tracks, and I don't know what the story is about that, but somehow they met between [a New Mexico town] and [an Arizona town]. I think just married young and didn't have a good solid footing there, and they stayed with my grandma for a while. Of course, my grandma will take anybody in, you know.

I went to preschool and kindergarten on the Reservation and I went to [the city] for two months when they tried to bring me here during my first grade, and then I went back to my grandma's house. I guess I was just so tied to, to her, um, to her ways of bring up, 'cause we lived with my grandma quite a lot. So anyway, fifth grade on up through high school, graduation from high school has been, was on the Reservation. And through that time I just, I never picked up the Navajo language. That time when it wasn't all that important to me. I don't know, I sometimes wonder if some of it had to do with the way I was treated, or about the way I didn't belong, I wasn't, so I felt, well, you know, on to other things. I knew I'll never belong, I'll just

lose and I'll just go off and I'll make it on my own. So I think things just got turned around for me. It's, not being a part of that environment.

I was six years old when I came to [the city] and I think I was here maybe a couple of months and I just, I could not handle it. I wasn't doing well in school. I missed my grandmother dearly 'cause we were so close and I pleaded with my parents to go back. Whatever it took, you know, um, made up any excuse to go back. I told them I would help grandma. I would to this, I would do that, and I guess financially for them, too, it seemed like the wise thing to do. So I did get sent back after a couple of months. So at six years old that was really kind of a shocker for me. It was a biggie, I mean, this city, the smog, the noise, the buildings, the, it was all just frightening to me. So I got my wish and was able to go back and spend maybe two years there. By then they thought, well, I think I can handle it, so. And I left and I came back to [the city]. And it was still rough. It was a difficult adjustment, not to mention that we were in one of the school districts where there were very few Native Americans. I just didn't identity with anybody. I just felt singled out of everything. But that was my, I guess, my feeling about it. That wasn't how other people perceived me. And I was just like everybody else. I mean, they went about doing their own thing. It wasn't that they really cared, you know. I never had to deal with name calling. I never had to deal with any of that. I was just a little bit sensitive that somehow I was different. I was a different color. My hair was dark. My hair was long, you know. And I always hated when my mother made me wear braids to school all the time, you know, and I didn't like that. And I just, I guess maybe the stereotypical image of Indians, and I, I just don't like that, um, some of the times. But they never made me feel, you know, unwelcome. That wasn't my place, um, so I gradually started to adjust a little better. But again come fifth grade, we moved back to the Reservation again.

I would spend some time with my grandmother, of course, and she would, you know, we'd be maybe cooking, if it had something to do with food, you know, she'd tell me the do's and don'ts about, you know, there's certain ways you cut meat, there's certain ways you don't cut meat, there's certain ways you handle a knife. Um, there's, you know, you don't necessarily use spices in your food. You know, culturally we're not chile spicy people. And, just things like that, you know. She, she kinda taught me along with the cooking along with maybe, um, the cleaning, you know, just keeping your house clean, taking care of your home, your environment, and it takes care of you. Just having a real respect for your environment and the land and things like that. Take care of the yard, the pets, the animals. I remember she always had stray dogs. She still does now, but she never would really turn a stray dog away. She'd take care of them. I don't know if she really had a love for animals, but she always put out food for them. Just a real respect for things, especially things that had to do with nature. I remember it was always just me, you know, me, maybe it had to do with the natural concept in the Navajo culture that the woman be taught

all this information. I remember she would chase boys out of the kitchen and say, you know, "You guys don't belong in here. You go out and play." Or maybe especially during ceremonies, I remember that so well, the guys sit on one side and the women sit on the other side. There was a separation there. Um, the boys, just, they were always pushed out. They were always pushed out. They were always kinda on the outside looking in and I was always involved in the activities that were going on.

And she always told me, you know, if you didn't do things appropriately the way they were taught to us, that maybe sometime in your life you would suffer, you know, some kind of, you know, what is it, um, I mean it would all come back to you in some form. You know, maybe illness or, or something not real tragic. But something happened to you to make you question, "Oh gosh, maybe I should have done it then, now this is why this is happening." Any time I was going to do something I always thought about the consequences first, all the time. It's real interesting. I've always thought about the consequences which made me think twice about whether what I was doing was right or wrong.

Now that's real difficult in dealing with what I have to do in, I guess, the outside world as we call it, where's there's competition, there's a lot of things going on. And I feel a little bit removed from that, of what she had taught me. I still try to, you know, remember those things and keep it a part of my, a part of my, of my daily life. When I'm making decisions I want to (inaudible) upon something, but it's hard because there's other people that have influence on you. Your environment has influence on you. They say, well that may be the right thing, but you should do this, you know, this is also right. So it's a little more difficult now, you know, dealing with it in that way. But I feel good because I have a base, I guess I have a base of knowledge, of understanding, of a certain value system, I guess, at least to kind of guide me through some difficult times. And I always feel good when I go home and I see my grandmother or she comes down and she visits because, you know, that whole thing is just kind of like re-energized, you know. And I feel so good and I go out and I can tackle the world. But if I haven't seen her or if I haven't been to her home, I'd say maybe in, maybe in a year, I just go crazy. So, I just saw her a few weeks ago and that was just the greatest feeling again, so I feel good.

Now, um, when we have like ceremonials and we have a medicine man coming in and performing a ceremony, he'll do a little bit of storytelling around in the hogan, you know, when maybe a prayer is being done and we're kinda taking a break, he'll fill in a story about something. But the thing is I don't understand Navajo and it will all be in Navajo, so I'd be sitting there and I'd be asking my mom or my grandma, "What is he saying. What is he saying?" And they'd get really mad at me and say, "Shh, I'm listening. I'm listening," you know. And I'd say, "What are they saying? What are they saying?" And that connection would never be made. I never got an interpretation of what he was saying and I moved out not knowing what the story was, or maybe

what the moral, the moral side of what he was saying. He was sending a message, obviously, and everyone was quiet, but I never got that message 'cause no one had time to interpret it for me, because by then it was time to get up and clean up and get him food and water and people are running back and forth. So, I would just kind of, you know, wonder, well, I wonder what he said. And again that's because, you know, I didn't know the Navajo language and I regret that now very dearly. I mean, I just, I wish I had learned it. I think a whole lot would make sense to me now than it does.

We had quite a few ceremonials when we were home. I always treasured those moments because it meant, you know, extended family coming together, cousins, and aunts and relatives and even then traveling in from far distant places. I think the furthest distance anyone had to come was from [a New Mexico town], but still that meant seeing my cousins and we were all just very close. I'd say we had maybe seven or eight ceremonies throughout the year, you know. That's quite often and always with those a lot of preparation, you know, food, and materials that we needed, supplies, some cleaning out the hogan, you know, just preparing everything. And I always treasured those moments. It was work, but I enjoyed working because it was, like I said, the, the, the whole, I guess, just the work ethic, the culture. You have to do this, you have to work this way and do things this way. Of course, grandma taught me that and I didn't question it. I just worked and I enjoyed it because I looked forward to spending time with the family. So, it was working for, for a reward, which the reward was being able to see the family and bring everybody together. But I really miss those moments now. I'd say I get home for maybe, if I'm lucky, one ceremony out of the year now. And it doesn't seem like they go on as often as they used to. So, I'm anxious, I want to go back. I mean I just have this antsy feeling, "Let's go soon," but I can't, I mean, I just have too many obligations right now with work.

The hard thing about going back is my husband is very, um, he's just very used to being in [the city]. This is home. Home is no longer back on the Reservation. His vacation builds up and he just, you know, he doesn't take vacation either, so he's a workaholic as well. Severing those ties came about when he lost his mother. You know, mother was a real big part of his life and once she had passed away about two years ago that's when I noticed he just didn't want to go home. His dad's still there, but his dad has kinda relocated and got his life back together and doing things for himself. And the whole family I've noticed have just kinda broken apart. But going home, it's just, well, whenever and he doesn't miss it at all. It might have to do with our matrilineal society. Because see for me, my grandmother's still living, my mother's still living and there's me, the next generation. So they're like my teachers, my role models, and I have to have that constant, you know, contact with them. Even, like my grandma she had to come all the way down here to find me and see what was going on and just check on me and, you know, make sure everything's OK with the family. She never misses my birthday. She never misses Christmas.

She never misses my anniversary even. But she does that for the other grandkids. I think we have like a real special relationship, we're just so tight, we're just so tight, so, it, my husband understands that, too. I went home like maybe three or four times throughout the year and I went by myself. That's just how independent I've become. And I make the decisions basically to go where I want to go. I always take my kids, too, and it's real important for them to go back. That's part of our household and my husband's very comfortable with that. He doesn't go out unless I say he can go out. He comes to me, he asks me for advice, he doesn't make major decisions without consulting me, you know. Sometimes I, I, maybe overuse my authority from time to time, but that's just how I've been taught, that they can do housecleaning, that they can do cooking, they can do laundry.

And sometimes I go back to visit on holidays, I really try very hard to understand some Navajo that is spoken because my aunts and uncles will get into conversations and I'll try very hard to pick out little things that I hear. It's like a game. I have fun just sitting there and listening. My husband does the same when we go back to his relatives. We come back and we have a few Navajo words, you know, exchange and we try to, you know, we start saying things in Navajo, but it kind of dies out after a while until we go back home again. You know, we notice that it kinda came with us, you know, so that's really neat. Yeah, and I try to teach a little bit to my kids when they're home playing and they're gradually learning that. They don't understand the connection when we say salt, so they say, you know, give me the salt, so they say give me the [salt] and I say no, you don't say it like that. You have to say the whole part in Navajo, you can't just say [salt]. In other words, they think there's distinctive names for every little thing like that, so it's hard for them to understand that. So I'm trying to teach them one word at a time rather than tying it all in, because I can't myself tie it all in.

English has just been the primary language in our home. I think the only time my parents talk Navajo is when they don't want us to hear anything, that they're talking about. It's interesting because, like in, although we all lived in the same community, every time we went to grandma's house Navajo was always spoken. But every time we, you know, jumped back in the car and drove back to our house, it was always English. So I was able to pick up a few Navajo words here and there. Just when I was somewhat getting it all down, um, together, we left the Reservation. And of course being in [the city] where we were just, my dad went to school here, something we wouldn't use at all, there was no place for it. And then we went back, and then it was, you know, some little bit of Navajo. But then we get into high school, and by then it's kind of like not something that's, um, important to you anymore.

My mom and dad are both fluent in Navajo, however, they told me that, even my grandmother tells me this, she says that there's some words that she's forgotten that her grandparents and parents used that are very old and foreign to her, Navajo, you know, and she

says she's forgotten some of them and even now she can't remember. And even my Mom, there's some things that she'll want to describe and she can't describe anymore, and she struggles with Navajo because she can't say it and she has to say it in English. She's very fluent in it, but then she'll come to some stumbling blocks and can't say it. But even Grandma, even she, there's some words, only, only, you could say in Navajo and were carried down for centuries, but she's lost them and can't say them anymore. She's forgotten. It's sad, but then.

The ceremonies are very connected with the language. I know, the medicine men, it's interesting because my Grandma says, "Oh well, the medicine men will know." Or, "The medicine men should know these things." Of course they've got to know all these things. "They've got to know the terminology and the origins of all these sings." She says that. And sometimes she's even a little bit afraid to like, I guess, have a sing that, that she doesn't know, or that she doesn't have, or she doesn't think she should know it herself. Even in the ceremonial singing when they're doing something that's associated with prayer, you know, which is for seven or eight hours in the hogan and the prayer is over and all this language that goes on, all the religious ceremonialism is Navajo. And there's going to be words exchanged that, like I said, that no one has even heard of before but the medicine man. But they know these words from way back. The more modernized we become, we kinda loose some of that.

I've like learned the dances, learned the songs, but like the language, just, you know, there was like a barrier there. And now that I think back, I think my parents encouraged the dance and the songs, but they didn't encourage so much the language because I think, you know, you know, in general, you know, once you learn the language, you know, you've really retained some cultural, some real cultural strength, I guess, in all areas. And I don't know. I kinda think about that, maybe that's not what my parents wanted me to do, the language, you know, the songs and the dances were fine, but once it got to the language, they never encouraged that, or reinforced whatever was being taught at school because they always knew I would leave. And it's interesting how I've retained song and dance and probably could have retained language as well if they had, you know, spoken it more to me. But I was talking to my brother-in-law the other day, we were kinda talking about this whole language issue, and he was saying that, you know, I shouldn't feel bad for not having learned it because you just have to be totally immersed in the language all around you, you know, to have picked it up, and through generations and that just wasn't possible. So, it probably wasn't even something I could change even if I wanted to at the time, you know, as time went on and each generation got more educated, it was just less and less and less and I think of that, I guess, from within our tribe that it's very true that if you don't maintain, you know, some language identity it, everything dies out, you know. And it seems to be getting so close to that because families in each generation is becoming more and more educated. So, because I'm a second generation college graduate.

So, you know, my aunts and uncles and father before me were all educated and even my grandmother had some, some training off the Reservation. I think she even came to [a university] one time and got some training, so that's why her language skills, that's why her English is pretty, you know, pretty proficient. And so, it's just, you know, and of course my children, very, very little and it's just, it's just not important in our home, in where we are right now, but it's a real conflict for me inside because it is important. It's just something that's there that's telling me learn it, teach it, you know. And it's like it keeps pounding away at me until, you know, until I do something about it, but I guess it's true, unless you're totally immersed in it, you, you know, you're not going to retain the language in any form.

English is real difficult for me sometimes 'cause I guess I'm trying to relearn something that I never learned in the Navajo language, but yet I haven't really built on my English skills as much as I would have liked to either, so it's like I'm kinda being pulled from these two extremes. So, I'm kinda battling with that. I'm in school now and I've got to read at a certain level and gotta write at a certain level even to speak. But it's still the Navajo part of me pulling me back.

See, that's something I've been trying to learn and trying to come up with some middle ground, something people can feel comfortable with. Sometimes I even tell people I'm okay, I feel good, I can do both. I can handle switching back and forth or being a little, 50% of this or 50% of that, incorporating it all, but then something will happen, you know, maybe some experience like just the job interview and it will just make me fall off the track again and I think, "Oh." So, just when I begin to get there I begin to gain some confidence, you know, something will happen and I fall off and think, "Gosh, this is not," you know, "happening the way I want it to happen. It's not me." It seems to be one or the other, there's no middle ground, but I know there can be a middle ground, I know there can. What I would like to see is other people come together and share experiences and we all collectively come up with ideas. Maybe, I mean, other people are successful out there, seeing them as role models. Other educators, other Native Americans who are successful, who somehow seem to be able to do that. And I want to know how they do that. I want to know, you know, maybe they don't. I don't know, maybe they've got the same struggle I do. I really don't know what it will take. I really don't know. People are always telling me, spiritually, if you just feel, if you've got it in spirit, then (inaudible) will be okay. I feel I do have that, but that just doesn't work all the time when you're out there, in a big meeting, you know, and you're having to pull some strength. Sometimes you've just gotta say what they want to hear, you know, and I've learned to play that game. I've learned early the politics in dealing with difficult people. You've got to pull out your weapons when they call for it and defend yourself or people will walk all over you.

I'd kinda like to think of [Western society] as an additive. That's what I'm struggling with. I'm thinking that I can do this, that I can do both, but then timewise, I'm thinking, "Well, how am

I going to do this?" And then, that's when I feel it's gotta be one or the other, it cannot be both. "Look at you, you're running yourself into the ground just trying to juggle these two things, let alone family, let alone your job, let alone your schooling," you know. "Why let this constant battle go on? Just let one go and just deal with one," and once I choose to deal with one, like the business world, that's all I'll do and less pressure. I'm not battling with the time issue and learning quickly, um, as far as passing down to my children. Forget that, I don't need to worry about that anymore. So, that's that's, you know, I would like it to be an additive. I would like it to be both, but I haven't, I guess I haven't seen enough role models or examples of that. No one has really taught me about that, that there's possibilities in doing that, so I think if I talk to more people maybe along that line I'll find out how they were able to do it, and maybe I could, you know. So, but I feel I'm going backwards, I'm kinda wanting to go back in time and pick up all those things I've left behind or I took for granted or I never learned and then, you know, be able to come back to the future and live with these two things. Whereas most people I know that live with both have already learned the language and have added on the English and they are able to do both. I haven't met anyone who's gone back, picked up the language, and been able to come back to the present and carry on from there.

So, you see, I just, I try to find a balance constantly. I try to keep in sinc. When something's out of balance, I'm trying to get too much into the Western mainstream of things, I will, I mean, I think about it some days, I'm just going to pack my bags and go back home, disappear for about a week and just really get in touch with everything again. Come back. It's funny, too, cause my brother-in-law had just said we all need to go home and have a little prayer done, kinda balance things and make them more harmonistic because since my mother-in-law had passed away things had been kinda out of balance for all family members. We all just need to go back and put it all back together in the nice little.... He said if things had been kinda happening spontaneously and things not really in sinc, he said, that's why, because with her death we kinda just lost touch with something. And after he said that, I thought you know that's true. You know, I, I've always made it a point to always go home and I haven't been going home. What's wrong, you know, something's keeping me from not doing that. He just mentioned that last week and I thought, "Hey, that's it. Gotta go back and get this done, and then come back and feel better."

It's not just the ceremonials or the prayers, it's even just being around your elders, just have that thing, just rubbing off on you and making you feel at peace with yourself. It doesn't have to be going back for a special ceremonials. I feel better though when I take a week off at a time to go home and immerse myself in the culture and do as much as I can within five days and I feel good coming back. I mean, it's like this whole new refreshed, or refreshed feeling about being here and everything will be all right. And I feel good for at least three or four months and then it

gets hectic and I get bogged down again and things will happen and it's time to go back. You know, it's real interesting. My husband and I were talking because physically, geographically when you're going up to the Reservation, even though we haven't hit the Reservation borderline yet, there's like this imaginary line, when we're passed that, it's like, "Ooh, God, this feels so good," you know, "We're almost home." We get so excited, I mean, it's like, it's there within an arms reach and it's really funny because we talked about that one time. Why do we get so worked up about, you know, going home. We're not even home yet, but just getting closer and closer to it, it's really interesting, how it has this effect on you, you know. And then you're there and it's just great, you know, you just feel so good. And then coming back after having been there a week or maybe two weeks, you're coming back and it just feels good, you're bringing back this new energy with you. It's like going and getting supplies and you know, packed up for the season and you come back to [the city] and you're ready to pick up your role where you left it, basically. It's been almost a year since I've been home, and so I'm really hearing, "Go home."

I think as an individual the project has benefitted me to really look at things that have impacted, not impacted, but have had an influence in what I've become now. I mean, I'm talking about, we went all the way back to, you know, when I was being raised by my grandmother at age 4, 5, and 6 and then the transition from urban to the rural reservation. We just kinda went through this time line, where I really began to see who I am or why I became this product, and sometimes you often think that it's, I don't know, I was tending to think that my upbringing was not fulfilling, that there were just some things missing because I wasn't part of just one culture or the other, and the language I always have had a difficult time dealing with this issue that culture is language, but I don't agree with that and I think that you can be very culturated and not necessarily be fluent in your language. But I think I've changed a little bit with that because lately as I've been trying to learn more of the language I'm realizing that there's words that express things that you just can't explain in English and you lose, I guess, the whole meaning of the word and so I've really began, I've really struggled with that for a long time and now I'm beginning to be more accepting of that issue, that, you know, without the language, I guess, I really am losing some real understanding of something. And I am, I think I am, but I haven't given up on learning the language. I'm very much, even now, I've utilized it even more since I've been through this process of interviews and really thought back to the product of what I am and what more I want to be. So I think it's really heightened my self esteem and my self confidence to really project what I am and not feel like it was any, that I'm lacking something as far as the culture identity or even just overall, what I am because I didn't grow up in one culture or the other. Culturally, I think I touched on it a little bit already, but like I said, I think it's made me more aware of the importance of the language, the importance of understanding people who speak fluent, two different languages, not just Navajo, but Spanish speaking English, you know, bilingual or even trilingual.

DISCUSSION OF THE STORIES

The stories we tell have much to say about what is important to us (Bauman, 1986). Through talk and narrative stories we communicate to others the words and the actions from events that have an important relationship to those values and beliefs that we hold about ourselves. What we tell to others is related to what we perceive our Selfs to be (Garfinkel, 1967; Goffman, 1963). That is, the image we have or our Selfs and the way we live. What we tell in our stories reflects our belief system in our psychological domains (Briggs, 1988). The remembrances of the participants addressed their sociocultural situations from the time they were quite young and growing up on their respective Reservations. What they reported were the important aspects of their lives as they remembered living them. Their stories showed how they lived and with whom they interacted. They described their home situations and the cognitive and the emotional interplay with their parents, their relatives and their neighbors.

They talked about their families and how they were structured. They revealed the makeup of their immediate families and the other people living with them or in close proximity. They all had brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles. In most instances these extended relations were grandparents, aunts and uncles, and were framed in their cultural understandings of relatives.

Some families were more extended than others. In Peter's case not only was the nuclear family housed into one dwelling, but grandparents and uncles as well lived there. In Julie's situation, she and her parents lived in one home, but visited their kin and the clan members quite often. These living arrangements revealed the traditions and the ways of life for these four individual people and their respective indigenous groups.

Travel between communities and villages was mainly to nearby or neighboring places. While there was a variety of reasons for this travel, it fell into the categories of social visiting, ceremonialism or labor-related. Annelise told how she would go with her father as he delivered drinking water to the houses spread throughout their area. She would go into the house with him and then wait there with the woman of the house until her father was nearly finished with his delivery. Usually the woman gave her a snack as a part of social etiquette.

In some instances, people traveled great distances to participate in these events or activities. Annelise recalled that one set of grandparents lived right next door, but her other grandparents lived 50 miles away. In the summer she would go visit them for most of those months. She remembered how people would travel to events or to just help out when someone needed it. Often these visits were quite extended over several weeks or to even a month. Although it was not directly stated, there was a sense that the long distance traveling was not seen as an inconvenience. For instance, Julie told how she and her family would visit the Reservation a few

times each year, yet when the time stretched into many months, her grandmother would close up her house and travel to the city to visit with them; a journey over 250 miles. The impetus to go long distances rested in their desire to maintain their clan relationships and their connections with one another. Their stories showed the extent to which they moved about to maintain their connections within their familial and their social networks. It points out the correlation between their beliefs in retaining their relationships with their clanfolk and the communal living situations most of them had.

Life stories are useful because the information that people tell in their stories reveals the cultural and the social processes that are extant in the narrator's community (Cruikshank, 1990). The four consultants talked about their clan relations, their physical environments, their extended families and their beliefs about the quality of their lives. They also talked about the expectations for their actions and their behaviors as fundamental parts of their cultural and social teachings. In these stories the consultants told about the language and the social behavioral expectations when they were away from their homes. They were required to use their heritage languages to speak with their elders in polite conversations. This was so because most of the elders did not have a facility with English which put the conversational responsibility upon the participants. Respect was given as another reason for using the Heritage Language with their elders. Properly raised children showed respect by talking with their elders in their heritage languages, just as their parents spoke the Heritage Language with each other and with their elders. It was suggested that when a child speaks in the elder's language, then the child's parents receive respect from their elders and from their peers for having raised a child in the proper tradition. Annelise's remembrances were very clear about the expectations for language and behavior. She recalled that when visiting with elder relatives a great amount of respect needed to be shown. The Heritage Language was used at all times and she was expected to be on her best behavior. She did not question her grandparents and paid attention to everything that was going on. When she returned home there was a sense of relief to be away from the tension brought about by always being "on."

There was much communal gathering in and around the houses. These informal gatherings were social and were organized around talk centered on the everyday events of the communities. Peter described how after supper people would gather out back of the house and talk. He related how there were times when he would come home after dark and hear the conversations, but could not see who was there because of the darkness. They primarily discussed the social business of the participants, planting and harvesting schedules and events, and plans for upcoming activities. Annelise emphasized that listening to her elders when there was even casual conversation was something that was just expected from children. It was a way of learning for her, not only to

listen, but to watch what was happening around her. Further, it was a fundamental part of what made her O'odham.

The words you use and the way you use language lets you know what your role is in the community, and guides your behavior in the interaction (Schieffelin, 1990). It is through language that we know who to expect to be doing what in any particular situation. Language, through its patterned ways of use, is set into organized routines in many situations such as ceremonials and rituals. The participants spoke about the relationship between speaking their heritage languages and their abilities to participate in the ceremonials and the rituals of their communities. In Annelise's case she grew up in a traditional home where they all spoke their Heritage Language. Among the four participants, her faculty was the most facilitating. She did not have problems participating in or understanding the events. She felt comfortable with her language ability and was able to communicate freely with anyone in her native O'odham. The other participants did not have as great a faculty. They spoke about having to ask what the words meant, and about their frustration when their relatives did not want to do the translations. They talked about how they felt that they were missing out on important aspects of their cultures and traditions. Julie in particular recalled that because of her inability to understand and communicate in Navajo, she missed out. For her there was never that connection made between herself and her heritage. She could not understand the stories and she did not get the "messages" the medicine men were giving the participants in the events.

Not speaking well their heritage languages presented barriers to their participation. Much of the meaning was lost to them because of their insufficient ability. They believed that embedded within the words were ancient thoughts and beliefs that they could not access. The two men considered themselves about average in their understanding, yet they too could not comprehend the total meanings of the ceremonials and the rituals. Julie recalled that her grandmother, a fluent speaker of Navajo, had trouble with ancient words that were passed down with the medicine men through the ages. The words were lost to her because she had forgotten them and could no longer say them. What the consultants did not explain, though, were the reasons for their continual participation even though they felt excluded linguistically.

Julie particularly felt she was excluded not only from a high degree of participation in the traditions, but also from the daily social activities. She spoke about not being able to carry out her tasks in the preparation of food because the other women spoke Navajo to her. Only when they switched to English did she understand what she was being asked to do. To her credit, she made great efforts to understand and would begin an action based on her best guess of the directions.

The meanings of one's existence are embedded in the language one uses in the day to day activities (Miller et al., 1990). Furthermore, the teachings of a heritage group are brought

through the language and are constitutive of the cultural models and the world views of the communities (Basso, 1990). With a very limited faculty, or not speaking the language of the community at all necessarily means that one's participation is limited, but more importantly, such individuals are not able to access the traditions of the culture (Woodbury, 1993). One's cultural identity and sense of belonging is central to speaking and understanding one's Heritage Language. The participants said that they were admonished when they were not able to understand or communicate in their heritage languages. The criticism came from their elders who very directly told them that they should learn to use the language. The contexts the participants reported were primarily social which does not seem unusual. Ceremonials and rituals have a set pattern of talk and routinized activities, and are not given to the patterns of social conversations. The consultants spoke about being able to chant and sing along with the group to varying degrees. The admonishments suggest that the elders believe that in order to pass on the traditions, values, beliefs and rituals, then, the language needs to be maintained not only for use in traditional events, but also in the day to day activities and social intercourse. Indeed, the participants spoke at length about their beliefs in the maintenance of their cultures and of the need for language renewal among their generation and the younger ones. They said that since there was a close relationship between the language and the traditions, the loss of the language would mean a loss of culture. They felt that there was an embedded sense of knowing and belief in the words that directly correlated with the traditions of their communities. Losing the Heritage Language would mean losing a great part of their cultures, the understandings and the wisdom of the ancient ways.

Because the language is so closely tied with the culture, the participants believed that a significant part of their identities as culture bearers was related to their abilities to use their heritage languages. They felt that they could call themselves Navajo, Hopi or O'odham because that was a fundamental part of their heritage. But in order to have a great sense of identity with their cultural groups, they needed to speak the language. For them, cultural identity was accepting and practicing the philosophy and the beliefs of their heritage groups. It was a way of thinking about their places in the world and the behaviors they should have. They learned the traditional ways and beliefs as they were growing up, and they needed to adhere to those as part of their identities. The language was an integral part of those formative years and their experiences, and became central to their feelings of who they were.

Because so much of their life experiences centered around language and culture, traditions and relatives, socializing and ways of living on their Reservations, they felt drawn to those elements. They spoke of home as back on the Reservation and as the places where they felt the most comfortable. When Julie and her husband went back home she recalled how excited they would become the closer they were to the Reservation border. Going home had a great effect on them. It gave them a sense of serenity and good feelings. Although Charlie believed he found his

peace wherever he happened to be, he was drawn to the Reservation where he participated in rites that renewed his inner strength. Peter and Annelise felt that home was where they grew up and that they could relax in that environment. They believed that the pace of life off the Reservations placed demands on them that always kept them on the move. All four have a sense of belonging, not to the Western part of their existences, but to those places where they grew up. That's what "holds" them, as Charlie put it. Part of the link that formed their senses of belonging was the Heritage Language. They felt that language was truly central to their identities and contributed greatly to their senses of belonging to their heritage groups.

Apache moral narratives have the power to teach the people how to behave and give guidance to their lives. They also cause the people to reflect on their actions and to evaluate the paths they have chosen (Basso, 1990). The life stories Cruikshank (1990) collected in consultation with three Athabaskan elder women were instructive of the ways the women altered their life paths through their own continual storytelling. This project likewise contributed to the consultants' lives. Though their own talk and reflection on their experiences they taught themselves about the value of their heritage languages and about the structure of their cultural identities. As the discussions took place over the year-long project, they often spoke about how our talks helped them to sort out the mix of feelings they had. They struggled with describing and defining for me and for themselves what they were feeling about who they were. In the beginning they had very uncertain senses of belonging both to the Western society in which they lived and to the Traditional society from which they came. As the talks progressed they came to new and clearer understandings about themselves, their lives, their histories, their languages, their socialization to their communities and to their cultures. Their responses to the project were positive and centered on how they had acquired a greater sense of self.

CONCLUSION

This project provided a forum for the four American Indian participants to review their experiences and to determine those elements that were of significance and central to their identities. Language was for them a common attribute that carried a great amount of importance for their senses of who they were. They believed that language was the key element that would carry their cultures forward and maintain their traditions. To them the loss of language meant the loss of their cultures and it gave them much concern.

Their anxieties over culture and language loss evolved into certainties that they were going to do something positive to maintain and to recapture what they felt they had missed. They came to view Western society and English as added elements to their beings rather than a replacement of their past ways and traditions. They are now actively pursuing and acquiring greater language proficiencies. They came to firmly believe that their heritage languages were central to their

identities as culture bearers and was an important part of what gave them their sense of belonging; of being O'odham, Hopi and Navajo.

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